Welcome to our unique school in the heart of the City of London.
We’ve produced this information booklet to assist you with getting to know some of our procedures and policies when you join an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) class.

At Sir John Cass’s Foundation Primary School we are committed to providing:

- A stimulating, broad and balanced curriculum for every child.
- A religious education according to the principles and practices of the Church of England in a context where everyone is valued and respected.
- Excellent teaching and carefully targeted support to ensure every child is challenged to excel and achievements are celebrated.
- Staff development to ensure our staff are well trained.
- A safe, disciplined environment where all members of our school community are expected to treat each other with courtesy and respect.

We’re an Anglican school in the Diocese of London
We’re a Church of England Primary School- we welcome children of the Christian faith, all other faiths and none. We’re a diverse and inclusive school community. We believe in the importance of a religious education and we seek to engage children about faith, culture and religious practice from an early age. We have a very close relationship with St Botolph’s Church and attend several times a year in the early years and then each week from Year 1 to 6. We also work closely with colleagues across the Tower Hamlets Deanery and the Diocese of London.

Our Early Years philosophy
We think that getting it right in the early years is crucial for every child and we are uncompromising in providing excellent opportunities and an excellent education for every child at our school. Our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a special place to learn. We believe play is learning in the early years, that every child is unique and deserves the opportunity to interact in a creative, well-resourced environment which is rich with language and resources. We seek to deliver a rounded education which prioritises the vital skills of communication, physical development, early reading, writing and mathematics.
In the EYFS, children have access to our outdoor area throughout the day and are encouraged to learn outside and interact with younger and older peers. Learning through play can be messy! Your child will come home from time to time having been playing in our mud kitchen, painting or working with clay. All of this is a valuable part of the learning experience in the early years. Over the course of the Reception year, the curriculum and timetable will become more formal as we prepare the children for their transition into year 1. This will include taking part in longer whole class lessons and introducing children to some of the subjects they will experience in key stage 1. Children will need spare clothes and wellington boots when they join.

Open door policy
We operate an open door policy at Sir John Cass. Most questions or concerns can be easily addressed by speaking to your child’s class teacher or key worker. At any time you are welcome to speak to a member of the leadership team who will also be happy to assist you. Before you arrive you can get in touch with the school at any time by contacting office@sirjohncassprimary.org

Medical conditions, allergies and medical support
It’s vital you keep in touch with Claire Bush - Our Admissions, Attendance and Welfare Assistant. Claire manages school attendance and supports all children who have medical needs in school or require medication during the school day. It’s always wise to talk to your children’s class teacher or key worker about particular needs, but make sure you keep Claire informed as well.

Safeguarding and child protection
Our school is committed to safeguarding and promoting children’s health and welfare. The designated lead for child protection and safeguarding from September, 2017 is Alex Allan (Deputy Headteacher) and the deputy designated lead is Tim Wilson (Headteacher)

Our out of term time child protection and safeguarding contacts are Georgina Poullais (Family Involvement Worker) and Pat Toon (Early Years Practitioner)

You can find out more about safeguarding on our website www.sirjohncassprimary.org. You will also find a safeguarding statement at the back of the data collection sheet which you need to read and sign before your child starts school.
**Phonics**
We teach according to the requirements the EYFS Curriculum and use a programme of phonics teaching based on Letters and Sounds. Children in Nursery start to learn some of their letters, enjoy rhymes and playing with sounds.

In Reception, children learn to write, blend and segment. By the end of Reception they should be able to read simple books and write short sentences to communicate ideas.

**Home learning**
We believe education is a partnership. We suggest activities which can be completed at home each week. We also expect every child to read each night and practice their sounds and numbers. We hold a variety of workshops throughout the year to support you to work with your child at home. Every child in Reception is provided with an account to access our library and borrow resources. All children are also provided with logins for Mathletics- an online tool to help them to practise their mathematical skills.

**Home-School books**
We love you to keep us posted about learning at home via the home-school book. Please send in photos of special events or other significant achievements. We love to celebrate them in school. Each child is provided with a home-school book which you can use to keep in touch with your child’s class teacher. This book is also used as a record of your child’s reading.

**Children’s learning journeys**
Every child has a learning journey which documents the key stages of their development and captures important achievements. In the learning journey you will find pieces of your child’s work, observations from teachers and other staff. These document illustrate the key achievements and learning moments across the year.

**Parent conferences**
We hold regular parent conferences throughout the year which are important to attend. These are a vital opportunities to formally review your child’s learning and progress with the child’s class teacher and find out more about how you can support your child at home. We publish reports 3 times per year and regularly seek your feedback about your child’s learning and development.
Family services, advice and information
We offer a range of child and family services including:
- Regular activities, information and advice in The Sp@ce
- A toy library and a dual language library you can borrow from.
- A programme of adult education delivered in partnership with the City of London Adult Education Department.

Uniform
For children in our Nursery Class and below we do not have a school uniform. From Reception, children are required to wear school uniform every day. It is important that we have your support to help them to come smartly dressed every day. From Reception, children also need to have a simple PE kit which they change into for their specialist lessons. Our uniform supplier is Khalsa Schoolwear. You can shop online at http://www.khalsaschoolwear.co.uk/ alternatively you may visit them on Bethnal Green Road. You will find a full list of uniform and prices in your welcome pack.

Attendance and punctuality
In the early years children’s attendance and times may depend on your circumstances. For most children though, the core school day in EYFS ends at 3.25pm. When children move to Key Stage 2 their school day ends at 3.30pm.

Children should attend school every day, arriving promptly ready to start at 8.55am. All the evidence suggests that good and prompt attendance at school – even in the early years – leads to better outcomes later on. If your child is ill you must ring the school office to notify us. After the illness you will need to bring in a note or complete an absence form to tell us about why your child has been away from school.

Children in Reception will go directly to their classroom at the start of the year but after the first few days of settling will begin lining up on the main playground. Children will be collected from the classroom at the end of each day. We encourage good attendance through the award of certificates for children who are never late to school or absent from school. If your child’s attendance falls below the national average we will monitor it closely to ensure that we have made every possible arrangement to support your child to be in school whenever they are able to attend.

We will only authorise term-time absences for non-medical reasons in exceptional circumstances. If you feel you need to take your children out of school for any reason you must contact the school office and make an appointment to see the Headteacher.
Email and communications
We send out a fortnightly newsletter which rounds up the major events and dates for your diary in school. We also send out regular letters to parents and carers. You can keep in touch via our excellent website and you should ensure your details are up to date in the school office. This will help us to get in touch via email and texts when we need to. Our online calendar is a live diary of what’s going in school – you can find it http://www.sirjohncassprimary.org/calendar.html

Using technology safely
We ask that parents and carers refrain from using phones within the school premises. We have agreed an internet safety statement in school and we have regular sessions for children and parents to help them to use technology effectively.

Inset days and term dates
We have 5 INSET days during the year. These are announced in good time. You should visit our school calendar for information. We also publish term dates in your child’s home-school book.

School food
We are very proud of the high quality food available in school. Every child enjoys a freshly prepared school meal each day in school. In the Early Years and Key Stage 1 children eat their lunch in family service, sharing food together with staff. We cater for various medical and food needs. To talk about any special requirements you should speak with Claire Bush our Admissions, Attendance and Welfare Assistant who will be happy to help. If your child goes on a school trip, they are provided with a freshly made packed lunch.

Pupil premium, Early Years Premium and free meals at Key Stage 2
Your child may be eligible for pupil premium or early year’s premium if you are on low income or out of work. You can check online today at https://myfreeschoolmeals.com/ to see whether your child is eligible.

Home visits and calls
Every child who accepts a place in the school receives a home visit. This sets the scene about what is going to happen in Nursery or Reception and gives the child and parents an opportunity to get to know the Class Teacher or Key Person and ask any questions they may have in home environment. You only have a home visit once, so if your child is already attending our nursery this should already have happened. If not, do let us know.
You will be asked to complete some forms which will relate to your child’s needs, medical and dietary requirements. Home visits help the key person see your child in their own home surroundings and helps them to engage in a more natural conversation with them. This will enable your child to come to Nursery knowing a friendly, familiar face, which in turn helps them to settle in more quickly. You will be contacted before the end of the summer term to arrange a home visit prior to your child starting school.

If you are new to the school you’ll also receive a telephone call in June or July to welcome you and find out more about your child’s current setting if they attend a nursery. If we have information about the Nursery your child already attends we will contact them shortly to find out more information about your child’s learning, progress and development.

**Visits to school before you start**

You are warmly invited to get involved with school life before your child officially starts school. We include recent newsletters in the welcome pack and some fliers for different activities which you can drop into over the coming weeks.

**Start of term**

School is open to children from Wednesday 6th September, 2017. Unlike many other schools we like to get most children back to school as soon as possible. Please see the list below to check when your child will be starting.

- If your child already attends a class e.g. they are in Nursery and transitioning to Reception or Investigators or Discoverers their first day of term is Wednesday 6th September, 2017.
- If your child is new to the school and has a full time place in Investigators (Nursery class), their first day of term is Wednesday 6th September.
- If your child is new to the school and has a part-time place in Investigators (Nursery class), their first day of term is 11th September.
- If your child is new to Discoverers their first day of term is Wednesday 6th September, 2017.
- If your child is new to Reception, their first day of term is Wednesday 6th September, 2017
- Parents with children in Explorers should confirm their child’s start date with the Explorers team.

Occasionally, children find it difficult to settle in. Where this happens we work closely with you to find a solution and ensure they settle in as swiftly as possible.
Online payment for some services

We have been working hard to make it easier for you to pay for services. If you know you are going to be regularly using childcare before and after school you are strongly recommend to set up a standing order to help you organise your regular payments.

For other services we use a system known as ‘SIMS Agora’ which is very easy-to-use and will offer you the flexibility to make online payments whenever and wherever you like, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week - safe in the knowledge that payments are secure and use the highest level of card security and that funds will reach the school safely. We’ll help you sign up to this online payment system when you arrive at school.

Breakfast, tea and holiday club

We offer before and after school care and child care in the school holidays for 48 weeks of the year. If your child requires childcare this can be arranged once your child has fully settled into their class. Please discuss this with your child’s key worker who will be happy to help.

We have a Breakfast Club which runs from 7.45am-8:45am Monday-Friday where the children can have breakfast and play before they start the normal school day. Our tea club runs from 3:30pm-5.55pm Monday-Friday, where children can have a light tea and participate in a wide and varied programme of activities.

From Year 1 to 6 children can attend our Play Centre which operates every day from 3.30-5.55pm.

You'll find all the price lists for different services in the information pack folder.

Childcare vouchers and free childcare

We do accept Childcare Vouchers as payment for your Childcare fees. Please see the main office before making any arrangements to use vouchers. Our Ofsted Registration Number is: EY288677. You may also be eligible for free childcare if your child is aged between 2 and 4. Please speak to the school office to find out more.
What you need to do next?

1. Fill out the data collection form enclosed in your pack and sign the safeguarding agreement
2. Read and sign the home-school agreement
3. Come along to school on our welcome days later in June or July
4. Call or email the school office office@sirjohnncassprimary.org if you have any questions!