



Essendon C of E (VC) Primary School

Encouraging Everyone's Light To Shine

Information Booklet

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Ducks' visit to Early Years



Traditional Nativity

Essendon C of E (VC) Primary School

Encouraging Everyone's Light To Shine

The little school at the heart of the community.

“Pupils develop well both academically and socially.” Ofsted 2017

Situated in the beautiful village of Essendon, with an idyllic setting and ease of access from Welwyn Garden City, Hertford, Hatfield and Potters Bar, Essendon is an ideal option for those seeking a small, community-based school, with all the benefits that brings to a child's education.

Our vision, *Encouraging Everyone's Light To Shine*, underpins everything we do, and staff work closely together with the needs of each individual pupil at heart. The curriculum is exciting and varied and, as such, the pupils enjoy coming to school and make excellent progress, whatever their starting point.

“You have ensured that pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including opportunities to learn about the outside world.” Ofsted 2017

We pride ourselves on our broad and balanced curriculum and the wide range of opportunities children can expect to receive in order to take their learning in new and exciting directions. We are fortunate to have an extremely supportive community of parents and families who work closely with the school to support pupils in their learning at school, at home and beyond.

We are blessed with a dedicated and highly skilled governing body who are integral to the running of the school, working in many different capacities. In particular, our governors work with staff to help develop different areas of the curriculum as well as being closely involved in the finances, resources, premises and staffing of the school.

“Pupils are very well behaved, both within the classroom and in the playground. They are thoughtful, kind and generous with their time and support. In lessons, pupils are eager to learn.” Ofsted 2017

We warmly invite visits and prospective parents are welcome to make an appointment to visit the school at any time.

Ms Belinda Canham
Headteacher



Aerial view of the school



Our Classes

“The split nature of each class (whereby two year groups study together) works very well.” Ofsted 2017

We have two year groups in each class. This gives each teacher the time to really get to know the pupils well. Less time is needed for handover and getting to know the pupils. The pupils take turns being the older or the younger year group in each class. This gives them the chance both to learn from older pupils and to have the opportunity to teach younger pupils. We have found this system benefits the pupils in both year groups. It is a well-researched and evidenced fact that pupils learn well from teaching and explaining to others.

Pantherswood (Early Years Foundation Stage)

Our EYFS class is made up of a mix of Nursery and Reception-aged pupils who work and play together. We offer flexible Nursery arrangements, including the possibility of 30 hours Nursery. Our Early Years staff are happy to discuss what might work best for your child and for you as a family.

The transition between our Nursery and the Reception class is seamless. However, we are also very happy to welcome new families during the Reception year. Our small and friendly school ensures that in no time, they too are fully integrated into our school family.

The Foundation Stage class provides a broad and balanced curriculum incorporating active learning and first-hand experiences. We follow the Foundation Stage curriculum which applies to children from birth to the end of Reception.

Homewood (Key Stage 1: Years 1 & 2)

Our Key Stage 1 class is Homewood. Like all our classes Homewood is a mixed age class of children (Year 1 and Year 2). In this class, children build upon the skills and abilities learned during the Foundation Stage. Our curriculum ensures that children cover all aspects of the National Curriculum. We retain an emphasis on independent learning and developing the whole child as an essential aspect of a wider education.

Warrenwood (Key Stage 2: Years 3 & 4)

Pupils in Warrenwood build on their learning and the skills developed in Key Stage 1, continuing on their journey through our engaging curriculum in order to meet the exacting standards of the National Curriculum. They continue to enjoy the benefits of our first rate outside facilities, ensuring stimulating cross-curricular learning.

Harefield (Key Stage 2: Years 5 & 6)

During their time in Harefield class, pupils begin to prepare for their transition to secondary school and are given increasing amounts of responsibility, such as becoming a school captain, sports leader, or leading our acts of worship.



Nursery enjoying the Outdoor Classroom

“Since Nursery and Reception share the same well-resourced space, transition between the stages has been easy.” Ofsted 2017



EYFS Unit

“Children’s skills are developed throughout the early years, ensuring that they are ready for learning in Year 1.” Ofsted 2017

An Inclusive School

“Parents are appreciative of the care that staff provide for pupils. Parents reflected on the ‘nurturing and inspiring environment’, the ‘exceptionally hard-working and caring teachers’ and the ‘friendly, happy school.’” *Ofsted 2017*

At Essendon, every child is equally important, regardless of their background, gender, faith or needs. We welcome applications for our school places from all sections of the community. We ensure that all our policies and procedures promote and ensure equality. We have high expectations of all our pupils. We encourage respect between all members of our community, and seek to work through problems together with pupils, helping them to understand the consequences of their actions and the impact our words and deeds can have on others.

We understand that transition can (as well as being an exciting time) cause anxiety for children and their families. We individualise transition arrangements for pupils into our school, between year groups, and out of our school. Our Inclusion Manager will meet with families to discuss how best to make transition as smooth and positive as possible.

“As a small school, the pupils I spoke to felt that pupils treated each other like members of a family.” *Ofsted 2017*

We are a small school and we know each of our pupils very well which enables us to plan for their individual needs and celebrate their successes. Each child’s progress is carefully and regularly monitored. Class teachers enable good progress to be made by all pupils by delivering high-quality lessons, differentiating the work so that all pupils are challenged at an appropriate level; and by devising and providing individualised work programmes where appropriate. We work closely with families to plan support in any area of learning or well-being, whenever needed.

Some pupils may require special or additional provision to achieve their full potential because they have Special Educational Needs (SEN). This could include children with learning or behavioural difficulties or children with disabilities or other needs. Class teachers are responsible for meeting the needs of all children in their classes, including those with SEN or those with additional needs. They are supported by our dedicated and nurturing Inclusion Team in this task as well as, when appropriate, outside agency and specialist support available to our school.

We are happy to support children with medical needs. If your child has an inhaler, you simply need to register this with the school office. For any more complex needs, please make an appointment with Mrs Wilkinson in the school office to discuss a Health Care Plan. Please be aware that we are not permitted to administer non-prescribed medicines at school.

A Safe School

“Pupils feel very safe at school. Pupils stated categorically that bullying did not happen at Essendon.” *Ofsted 2017*

We understand and appreciate the trust that parents put into a school to care for and ensure that their child is safe at school. We follow safer recruitment procedures when appointing all staff and ensure that any adult working at the school, whether as an employee or a volunteer, has undergone all appropriate DBS and other vetting procedures before working with children.

Our staff are all trained to safeguard pupils and prevent them from harm. We work closely with families and external agencies to ensure that early intervention leads to better outcomes for our pupils.



Enrichment week trip to Celtic Harmony Camp



eSafety Workshop

A Christian School

“The biblical inspiration for the school’s vision directly shapes decision making, policies and practice in enabling all pupils and adults to flourish.” SIAMS 2020

At Essendon, we follow a values-based curriculum. Pupils are taught about the importance of the Christian values (such as Love, Joy, Friendship, Hope, Forgiveness) and all members of the school community, both adults and children, are encouraged to live out those values which underpin everything we do at school. As such, the learning environment is caring and supportive. Pupils learn from and support one another; they recognise the achievements and qualities of their classmates.

Pupils are given daily opportunities to reflect on our school values and to worship either as a whole school or in their classroom. We work closely with St Mary the Virgin church and take regular opportunities to visit the church, whether for an end of term service or for other learning opportunities throughout the year. We also love welcoming members of the church team into school on a regular basis. “Open the Book” assemblies, in which our church community brings Bible stories to life are a highlight of our year.

“The school is extremely inclusive, and all families feel welcome. There is a respect for difference and a culture of care where everyone is treated with dignity and respect as people created in the image of God.” SIAMS 2020

It is intended that there should be the closest relationship between the content and conduct of religious education and school worship and the ethos of the whole school. In religious education sessions, as well as being taught about Christian principles and beliefs, pupils are given opportunities to learn about other major world religions, cultures, religious beliefs, customs and ways of life and traditions. The caring ethos of the school and the value that we place on the development of the whole child: spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in all aspects of school life.

Our Outdoor Classroom provides a wealth of opportunities for our pupils to grow spiritually and socially, to develop their sense of curiosity and independence and to love life. It is used to enhance our curriculum, for reflection and worship and for having fun!

A Community School

Community is very important at Essendon. We welcome and appreciate families’ involvement in school life and we work hard to develop good links between home and school. Parents are very active in raising valuable funds for the school, arranging fun events for pupils and families and contributing to the day-to-day running of the school by volunteering to help with administrative, pupil related and other school related tasks.

We also see ourselves as an important part of the local community. In addition to our excellent relationship with St Mary the Virgin church, we work with the community in a number of different ways, including hosting Happy Apple Stay and Play toddler group each Thursday morning at school.



Easter Experience at Church



The great Christmas biscuit bake and give-away! We made and delivered 200 biscuits to our neighbours



School Information

Admissions Policy

Essendon is a Voluntary Controlled school maintained by Hertfordshire County Council. We have 15 places in our Reception class. Admissions in Reception are allocated according to Hertfordshire County Council's Primary Admissions Policy. The attached link will take you to the relevant website page on the Hertfordshire County Council website:

<http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/edlearn/admissions/>.

Please be aware that under current legislation "Nursery" and "Reception" places, even in the same school, are not linked and therefore families have to make two separate applications for places. We use the same criteria as Hertfordshire County Council for our Nursery admissions. We have 10 places in our Nursery. Details about how to apply for our Nursery can be found on our website at <https://www.essendon.herts.sch.uk/admissions/>

The School Day

We have a "soft start" to the day. Pupils are welcomed into their classroom from 8.40am to 8.50am. Any pupil arriving after 9.00am will be marked "late".

School Lunches

We provide hot and cold lunches with a vegetarian option every day. Lunches are free for any pupil registered for free school meals. Please speak to the School Office in strictest confidence for further information. A menu is provided by the school office to enable pupils and their families to decide on their choices in advance.

School Uniform

School Uniform enables pupils to take pride in and represent the school wherever they go. It is therefore very important that the uniform code is followed. It promotes a sense of belonging and inclusion. To this end, we ask families to encourage pupils to remove nail varnish or temporary tattoos for school.

Our uniform

Black school shoes or plain black trainers

Grey or black trousers; shorts; skirt or pinafore dress

Red and white check dress (for the summer months)

Grey, black or white socks

Red sweat shirt or cardigan

White polo shirt

Black shorts and a team coloured T-shirt

For outdoor sports pupils will require trainers (and in winter months will need a plain black no logo track suit)

New uniform can be purchased from http://www.smartyschoolwear.co.uk/Essendon_C_Of_E.

For health and safety reasons, long hair should be tied back and jewellery (other than small stud earrings for pierced ears) should not be worn.



Enjoying the apparatus!



Mothers Day School Lunch

Attendance

At Essendon, we understand and value the importance of good attendance. We are fortunate to have supportive parents who recognise that more learning occurs when children are present. We encourage good attendance by celebrating pupils who attend well in our weekly celebration assembly. It is the duty of every parent to ensure that their child attends school every day that the school is in session and that he or she arrives punctually.

Extra-curricular activities

A variety of school clubs are offered for pupils depending on the interests and availability of staff to organise and manage particular activities. In recent times, such activities have included arts and crafts, football, individual music lessons, band, choir, maths, lego, dance, technology, Worship Group, French and tennis. In every year group, opportunities are taken to widen children's knowledge and experience of curriculum areas and topics by educational visits to places of interest. The children in Years 5 and 6 are taken on a one-week residential school journey. Theatre groups, performers or visiting speakers also regularly visit school to enhance, extend or add relevance to our curriculum.

Wrap-around care

Wrap around care is offered by MultiActiv. More information can be found on our website.

Swimming

All pupils have an opportunity to cover the swimming requirements of the National Curriculum before they leave in Year 6. Catch up classes are offered for any pupil who has not met the required standard.

School Council

We have an active School Council made up of pupils from each year group democratically elected by their peers. They have an important role to play in bringing the views and suggestions of their classmates to the attention of the Senior Leadership Team. They choose which charities we will support each year. They are consulted on and play an active part in shaping new policies (such as our Behaviour Policy and Homework Policy). They are also invaluable in the role they play in helping to recruit new staff (who often describe their School Council interview as the most gruelling part of the recruitment process!)

School Teams

We have a Team System through which we reward positive conduct and behaviour (whether for academic effort or achievement, good teamwork or sportsmanship, living out our Christian Values or anything else which stands out). Children have regular opportunities to work with the teammates in different year groups, helping to foster a family feel at the school.

Further information

We are more than happy to answer any questions you may have. For further information, please either visit our website www.essendon.herts.sch.uk or contact the school office on 01707 261 209.



Warrenwood's Sikh Day



Supporting Children in Need