



Benington C of E Primary School



Prospectus
2023- 2024

Letter from the Chair of Governors

Dear Parents

Welcome to Benington C of E Primary School. This prospectus is intended to introduce the school to you and to give you information about the organisation and administration of our school community.

I firmly believe that a trusting partnership between home and school lies at the heart of a successful educational experience for your child and builds a child's confidence and development in school. You are warmly invited to join in our many and varied school activities and to share the experiences all pupils will have throughout the important years spent in their primary school.

The children at Benington have a happy, secure and caring working environment, with an exciting and creative curriculum, and are valued as individuals. We want our pupils to become independent and confident young people who are sensitive to others, interested in the world around them and prepared for the challenges ahead of them. Our mission statement of "Inspiring care, respect and trust for all, in our Christian Community" is at the heart of all we do as a Church of England School.

If you need information, or have any questions, please call in or arrange a meeting by telephone or email. The staff are always willing to help and to show you around our school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Louise Beckham
Chair of Governors

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The information in this prospectus is correct up to September 2024

Personnel

School Governors

Julia Beaven
Anja Tyler
Matt Clarke

Staff Governor
Head Teacher Governor
Co-opted Governor

Laura Caulfield

Parent Governor

Louise Beckham
Laura Dolby

Foundation Governor (Chair)
Associate Governor

Teaching Staff

Anja Tyler
Julia Beaven
Annie Garlick
Portia Whiskin
Jen Dean
Vanessa Welch

Headteacher/SENCO
Deputy Head Teacher

Teaching Assistants

Sarah Cotton
Karen Macleod
Janet Presland (Higher Level)
Zanie Bicer
Clare Baker and Sam Pulfer MSA duties

Non-Teaching Staff

Janet Burchell
Tina Hughes

Administration Assistant
Finance Secretary

Andy Digby
Donna Baxter
Sam Pulfer

Caretaker
Cleaner (+ After School Club Leader)
Cleaner (& After school club assistant)

Aims and values

Our aims and values are at the heart of our work. Staff, parents, governors and the children have all contributed. They are a reflection of the ethos of the school.

We work hard to help each child realise their maximum potential both educationally and socially, within a secure caring community. We believe in giving consideration to how others feel.

We hope that parents will understand and respect our aims and values and work with us in implementing them.

We believe –

- that the school should be a safe, secure, caring and happy community
- respect for ourselves and others, property and places should be encouraged
- in building self-esteem and encouraging confidence in all members of the school community
- that it is important that we work together for the benefit of all
- that everyone has a valuable contribution to make
- that fostering independence and individuality is important
- that everyone has equal rights regardless of race, religion, gender or ability
- tolerance of other peoples' viewpoints must be encouraged
- in celebrating achievement in everyone
- that everyone should feel they have support - someone will and does listen
- that the outside knowledge, experiences and values children bring with them into school must be recognised
- that the school should be an attractive environment
- in and actively encourage a partnership with parents
- that children learn best in a loving and caring environment and should not feel afraid
- that children must be given the opportunity to practice and develop skills. They must be given time to enjoy their successes

(This list is not in any order of importance).

Parents are expected to work toward the school's aims and values by –

- ensuring that children attend school in good health, regularly and punctually
- providing support for the discipline within the school and for the teachers role
- being realistic about their children's abilities and offering encouragement and praise
- participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainments
- ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect a child's happiness, progress and behaviour
- giving due importance to homework, hearing, reading and assisting in learning of tables and spellings
- allowing their children to take increasing responsibility as they progress through the school.

We are dedicated to making this school a caring, friendly place where we all feel valued and secure. We aim to promote –

- Independence
- Personal achievement
- High academic standards
- Co-operation
- Happy experiences
- Individuality
- Respect for others
- Self-esteem
- Any form of bullying is unacceptable.

Child protection

The school works in partnership with parents to support children in every way possible. This school is committed to safeguarding and prioritising the welfare of young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. However, the Children Act 1989 places a clear responsibility on schools to ensure that they work together with other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children

Safeguarding Children

All recruitment at Benington and any involvement of volunteers follow rigorous scrutiny of DBS. Benington is committed to the safeguarding of children and has complied with Hertfordshire County Council guidelines and training on this issue.

A brief history

Benington C of E Primary School was founded in 1873. It was opened as an all-age village school under the Diocese of St. Albans and our village church of St. Peter. Since the Education Act of 1948, the school has been a controlled school, meaning that it remains legally owned by the Trustees of the Church of England Foundation.

However, the Local Education Authority, with the Governors, has full administrative and financial responsibility. The Church is represented on the Governing body, so links are still maintained between the school, the Church and the local community.

The original flint and brick building still forms the attractive frontage to the school. A multi-purpose hall and modern classrooms have been added over the years. The purchase of additional land has given us a spacious playing field.

Facilities

The school has four classrooms, three within the main school building and a modular classroom in the grounds.

There is also a modular classroom which is home to an outstanding nursery.

We have a large multi-purpose hall which is used for assemblies, music, PE and also as a dining hall.

The main building houses the school library, office, staff room, toilets, headteacher's office and kitchen.

There are toilet facilities for the disabled and access ramps.

Our central library contains many fiction and non-fiction books. Each class also has a selection of fiction and non-fiction as well as reading books.

We have a large field where football and rounders pitches or a running track are marked out according to the season. There is also an extensive wild area with long grass, wild plants and fine old trees, which can be used for ecological studies.

The playground is outlined for games lessons and is big enough for all the children to use in wet weather. There is also a large playing field and large play apparatus.

The children are taught to take pride in caring for their school and its grounds in order to gain an awareness of the importance of caring for the environment in which we live.

Organisation

The school is organised into four classes and from year 1 these are of mixed age and mixed ability.

The class teacher is responsible for planning and monitoring the children's work. We value the partnership between school and home and like to keep parents fully informed about their child's progress.

Written reports are sent to parents at the end of the summer term and there are two evening meetings each year for private consultations between parents and teacher. Parents with any anxieties whatsoever about their child's progress are invited to contact the class teacher or the headteacher immediately.

Admission arrangements

The majority of children attending Benington School live in the village, but our register also includes some from other villages in the area and some from Stevenage. We are pleased to hear from parents who may consider placing their children in our school and will be happy to show them around.

Children start school in the Autumn Term of the school year in which they have their fifth birthday.

Children are allocated places in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council admission procedures.

Should there be pressure on numbers in a particular year group, the approved Hertfordshire admissions policy would be used to determine those children who would be offered places.

A 'Readiness for School' programme is in place before new children start school.

School times

Morning Session	8.45 am to 12 noon
Morning Break	10.45 am to 11.00 am
Afternoon Session	1.00 pm to 3.15 pm

We ask parents to ensure that children are always punctual for school, but not to arrive before 8.30 am. Children should go straight to their classroom and the register will be taken at 8.45 am. Any child arriving after that time must be brought into school via the office. Registration closes at 8:55 and any child arriving at school after that time will receive an 'unauthorised absence' mark.

Attendance

If your child has to be away from school, a phone call or email on the morning of the absence is required.

Please arrange doctor and dentist appointments out of school hours where possible.

We would ask you to ensure that family holidays are arranged to coincide with school holidays as children who are absent for long periods may miss important elements of the National Curriculum which it may not be possible to repeat

Holidays taken during term time are not authorised and the Governing Body looks very unfavourably on any requests to take children out of school for holidays. We would especially urge you not to take children out of school at the beginning of a term, or during May when the Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) are administered.

Any absence taken during term time has to be requested. Forms are available from the office.

Pastoral care and discipline

At Benington School we expect everyone to show respect and consideration towards others at all times and to behave in a courteous and thoughtful manner. We encourage good manners, honesty and a sense of responsibility, whilst also emphasising the importance of self-discipline.

We believe that good discipline is firm, consistent and fair, and should always be supportive of the child. If a child's behaviour becomes unacceptable, parents are informed at an early stage so that we can work together to put things right. Bullying is not tolerated and any such incidents are taken very seriously.

Please refer to the Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

School lunches

We are fortunate to have our lunches cooked on the premises in our own kitchens. Lunchtime is a part of the day when the children enjoy a meal together in a family atmosphere. The school meals are of a high quality, providing the children with a nutritionally balanced meal.

Lunch money is payable, half-termly by cheque, made out to HCL or on-line using 'ParentMail +Pay'. We prefer lunches to be paid for in advance.

At break time, children are encouraged to bring in a piece of fruit and a bottle of water with a sports cap to use during the day.

Children in Acorn and Willow Classes (four to seven year olds) are provided with fruit under the free fruit and vegetable scheme for schools.

Learning

We are continually looking at ways in which we can raise pupil motivation and achievement. Training is constantly taking place to support this whether it is for specific areas of the curriculum or larger whole school issues. We feel very strongly about ensuring that the children at Benington have every opportunity to learn to their full potential, that their learning is fun and that they feel secure enough to take risks.

It is important to create a supportive learning environment and connect this to the learning that takes place. Having informative and interactive displays in classrooms gives a big picture to their learning. Positive messages around the school help to raise the children's self-esteem. They need to feel part of a group, that their contribution, whatever its nature, is valued. They need to have a sense of belonging. Pupils need to be encouraged to set their own goals and reflect on their own progress so that they become learners with aspirations.

The school and their classroom should be safe havens for learning where there is consistency in expectations and standards enabling them to learn in safety. They need to be encouraged to have their own identity, catch them being successful and let them know it. Mistakes are valuable learning tools in an environment where they can take risks and achievement is valued, we need to reinforce success.

High expectations shapes performance. We need to continually encourage the children to be positive about themselves and believe that they can achieve. Our children are our future.

"Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't you are probably right" Our children definitely CAN!

Curriculum

Intent:

Through our curriculum children become **confident, resilient and independent learners**, with a passion for learning and the ability to express their opinions and beliefs.

Implementation

Skills are taught progressively across year groups leading to knowledge building over time. We provide learning with clear opportunities for speaking and listening.

Impact

This is seen in the work produced and the outcomes for all groups of pupils. Everything we do is with the child at mind, and strong relationships are built between pupils, staff and parents which create an atmosphere for learning which is conducive to success.

For information about individual subjects please see the [website](#).

Relationship and Sex Education

Sex education and health education are taught in ways appropriate to the age and maturity of the children.

The questions that they ask as a natural consequence of their curiosity will be answered appropriately and in the context in which they arise.

This aspect of the curriculum is very much a shared responsibility between parents and teachers.

All parents will be informed before the teaching takes place and will have an opportunity to view the materials used, so that they can be prepared for any questions or issues that arise afterwards at home.

Homework

We expect parents to take an active interest in their child's learning. As they move through the school, children will begin to bring work home on a regular basis. This will include reading, spellings and tables, which will be tested regularly at school.

Older children will also be set tasks related to current work as part of their preparation for the routines of secondary education and to enable them to become independent learners. Teachers are happy to discuss any aspect of homework with parents.

Inclusion

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

At Benington Primary School, the special needs of children are identified by the class teacher or a colleague by observation, testing, assessment and consultation with parents, previous school records and health agencies, eg school nurse, doctor, etc (particularly with physical challenges).

Our Special Educational Needs Policy has been written with the consideration of the national Code of Practice. This can be found on the website.

We have a qualified Special Educational Needs co-ordinator, who regularly helps to assess children with learning difficulties, working with the child's teacher to plan suitable programmes of work and support.

Parents are consulted at each stage and are invited to attend meetings with the SEN co-ordinator. If parents, teachers or the Headteacher feel that the assessment of a child's needs would benefit from an educational psychologist's report, the class teacher is asked to complete a referral form and parents are informed by the SEN Co-ordinator. Parents are consulted at every stage.

Children have the opportunity to talk on a one-to-one basis, or in a small group, with a member of staff trained in nurturing. We encourage our children to develop resilience and we believe that if pupils are supported in this way, they are more likely to achieve to their full ability.

Equal Opportunities

We wish to promote positive attitudes in children, staff, governors and parents so that the children can fulfil their potential and make choices, unhampered by expectations based on gender or role stereotyping.

We seek to fulfil the aims of the school regardless of age, gender, ability (both academic and physical) ethnic origin or background of the child. The school follows the Local Authority Admissions Policy, which does not permit sex, race, colour or disability to be used as criteria for admission.

The school will liaise with the Local Authority when assessing the needs and providing for children admitted to the school with particular physical disabilities.

Disability Discrimination Act

The school is committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.

We are further committed to challenging attitudes about disability and accessibility and developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

The school has:

- Ramps to the front and rear of the school.
- Wheelchair access via the rear classroom building.
- Wheelchair accessible toilet facilities in the main building.
- The modular classroom also has full disabled access.

The Governing Body

The Governing Body of the school consists of elected parents, Local Education Authority nominees, Foundation governors, a Parish Council representative and an elected teacher. The Governors meet at least twice a term and have general responsibility for the effective management of the school. They work within the framework set both by national legislation and the policies of the Local Education Authority.

Their responsibilities include the appointment and dismissal of staff, discipline, control of the delegated school budget, the forming of curriculum policies and maintenance of the premises. In practice, the Governors delegate the day to day running of the school to the headteacher.

Parents can raise any concern with a governor at any time, although it is usually more appropriate to contact the headteacher in the first instance. Elections and appointments of Governors take place every three years.

School uniform

Benington School colours are navy blue and white. A detailed uniform list is available on the website together with details of where our uniform can be purchased. All clothes and shoes should be clearly named. For P.E. activities all children should have a PE kit, made up of navy shorts, and white T-shirt and plimsolls, which they need to wear to school on PE days.

No jewellery (except watches), nail varnish or make up should be worn in school. If children have pierced ears, only plain studs (not rings) are acceptable and they need to be removed for P.E. or covered with tape. No hair gel, hair colours or braids should be worn and long hair should be tied back, in the interests of health and safety, using ribbons etc. in school colours. Hair styles should not be extreme in appearance nor of an outrageous fashion or design. 'Spiked' and gelled hairstyles are discouraged.

Health and Safety

If your child is taken ill or has an accident at school, we will contact you. It is therefore essential that we have up-to-date information on home and work telephone numbers.

If a child needed hospital treatment, a member of staff would wait with them until a parent arrived.

Medical visits are carried out at various stages of a child's school career. Parents are most welcome to consult our nurse over minor health matters.

Medicines

If a child is fit to attend school but has to take medication during the school day, parents should try to make their own arrangements for administering the medicine. If this is difficult, the headteacher will agree to the medicine being given by a member of staff. In such cases a medical form must be completed.

Child Protection

Benington School has a duty, under Section 43 of the Child Protection Act 1989, to inform the Local Authority if any child is thought to be suffering significant harm. Such harm includes non-accidental injuries, physical neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse. When assessing the need for such action, the child's best interests will be paramount.

School events

Parents are welcome to join us in school or at St. Peter's Church on several occasions during the year. There are annual events in which every child takes part, such as concerts, the Easter Service and the Christmas Carol Service. Parents also join us for our Harvest Festival, Sports Afternoon and the Parents' Consultation Evenings in October and March. Parents are welcome to attend celebration assemblies on Friday afternoons when children have the opportunity to share their work.

Seedlings Club

This club is for parents to bring their pre-school children to school where they join the younger children from Acorn Class. This takes place in the summer term.

Friends of Benington School (FOBS)

FOBS is a registered charity which aims to enhance the school's resources by raising funds for school equipment, activities and outings. Parents and teachers get together and organise social and fund-raising events throughout the school year. The events are varied and provide an opportunity for families to meet and have fun, whilst helping to support the school.

In recent years FOBS has provided the school with a range of resources for each classroom and guided reading and writing resources for the whole school. They have helped us to purchase laptops for all classes and have contributed to the furnishings in our library.

They have provided us with new dining room furniture and have saved funds for us to use in developing our outdoor learning area for the younger children.

FOBS is a good opportunity for parents and teachers to work together and improve the resources that will help our children develop.

If you would like to get to know some other parents and be part of this team please speak to the headteacher.

Extra-curricular activities

Extra-curricular activities are organised for the children after school. Staff, parents or friends of the school supervise these voluntarily. They include sport, art and football. Activities may vary from term to term. Children are encouraged to join and maintain their interest rather than attending casually.

Breakfast Club

Monday- Friday 7:45-8:45. £5 per session. Book through the school office.

After School Club

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 3:15 - 5:30pm. £10 per session. Book through the school office.

Educational visits and charging

Regular outside visits are organised throughout the year and we also aim to provide all children with the opportunity to take part in extended residential visits during their years at Benington. Other activities such as swimming, visiting musicians and theatre groups, cooking, etc. all help to develop and enrich the school curriculum.

With the exception of board and lodging, payment for all these activities is voluntary and no child may be excluded. However, if voluntary contributions are not sufficient to cover the cost of the event and the school is unable to fund the difference, the activity may need to be cancelled.

We are confident that parents recognise the value of these activities and with their full co-operation hope to continue to provide a varied and interesting programme of events. The Governors agree that the school may charge for activities which take place outside the school day, up to the actual cost of the activity.

Toys and sweets

Children are not permitted to bring in toys of any description as they are a distraction to themselves and the rest of their class. The children do not need toys in school and get extremely upset if they are lost or damaged. In the interest of dental health and good diet, no sweets are to be brought to school. This also ensures that our playground remains free of litter. The exception to this is birthday sweets which can be brought in to mark a child's birthday.

Complaints procedure

There is a procedure, under the Education (School Curriculum and Related Information) Regulations 1989, for a parent to register a complaint about the school in relation to the National Curriculum and religious worship.

The procedure has three stages, as follows

1. Informal complaint - discussion between the parent and the headteacher.
2. Formal complaint to the Governing Body.
3. Formal complaint to the Local Education Authority.

It is hoped that any concerns will be resolved quickly at stage 1. The headteacher is always happy to meet parents and talk about the school organisation and the arrangements we make for our curriculum which are outlined in this prospectus.

School term and holiday dates

Please see the website for up to date information.

Ofsted

The school had a short one day section 8 inspection in June 2018. The inspector was focused on finding evidence that the school was still good since the last inspection in 2014. The inspector graded the school as good, but also reported that he believed that it may have improved significantly overall.

Ofsted returned in November 2018 to do a 2 day Section 5 inspection. They gave us a verdict of good but told us that we were significantly good.

The Ofsted report can be downloaded from the school website at www.benington.herts.sch.uk, from the Ofsted website, or a copy can be obtained from the school.

SIAMS

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools

In February 2018, the school had its Diocesan inspection. Overall our school was graded outstanding which is the highest category that can be awarded. The report highlights all our strengths and our areas for development. The full report can be seen by visiting the school website at www.benington.herts.sch.uk

Key stage 2 comparative report

Subject	Percentage of pupils achieving at least the Expected Standard: school (2023)	Percentage of pupils achieving at least the Expected Standard: nationally (2023) ¹	Average scaled score: school (2023) ²	Average scaled score: nationally (2023) ¹
English reading	90%	73%	105	105
English grammar, punctuation and spelling	100%	72%	109	105
Mathematics	100%	73%	107	104
English writing (teacher assessment)	100%	71%	N/A	N/A
Science (teacher assessment)	100%	80%	N/A	N/A

¹ National percentages and scaled scores (2023) from: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-2-attainment-national-headlines/2022-23>

² Scaled scores guidance: www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-scaled-scores-at-key-stage-2