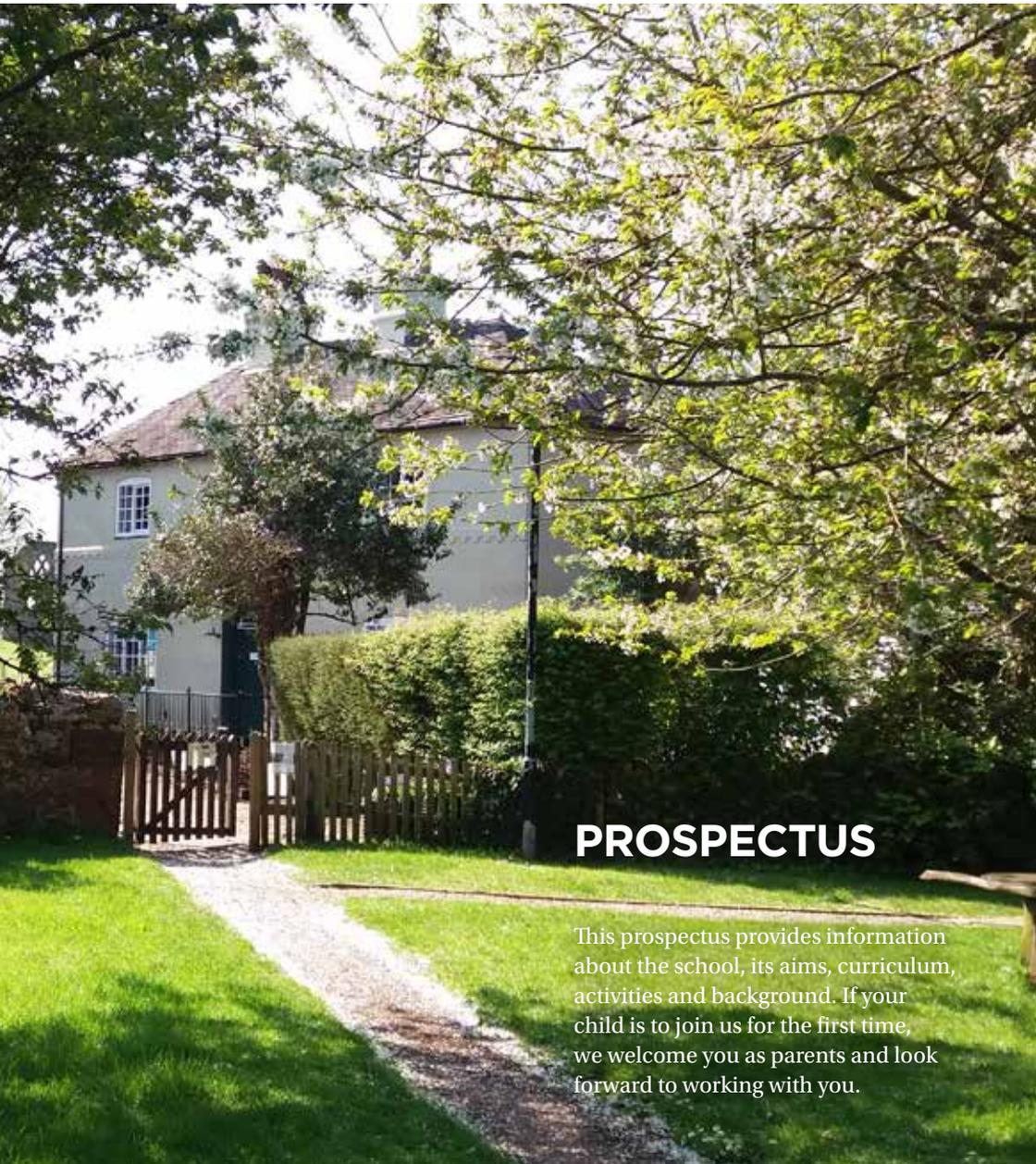




DAME CATHERINE
HARPUR'S SCHOOL



PROSPECTUS

This prospectus provides information about the school, its aims, curriculum, activities and background. If your child is to join us for the first time, we welcome you as parents and look forward to working with you.



We are a small independent school in a lovely little village called Ticknall. We are surrounded by fields and woods, with a beautiful school garden for endless fun and adventures... our children love it here, wouldn't you?

WHAT DOES DAME CATHERINE'S OFFER?

- Individual, child-centred education, which encourages self-motivation in learning and enables children to build self-confidence and self-esteem, and to reach their full potential.
- A partnership of parents, teachers and children working together with the same aims.
- An education that is about questioning, discovering and exploring, which — because of the school's independence and small size — is not confined by a framework of formal testing, and has the flexibility to extend beyond the National Curriculum.
- An approach through which children are treated as individuals, and each child's learning programme and pastoral care are tailored to his or her own particular needs.
- The encouragement of mutual respect and a wider appreciation of the community and environment in which the children live and learn.
- The opportunity to become part of a family! Teachers are referred to by first names, all ages play together, and we learn in a friendly and accepting atmosphere.



“Encouraging young people to believe in themselves and find their own voice whether it's through writing, drama or art is so important in giving young people a sense of self-worth.”

Michael Morpurgo



ABOUT DAME CATHERINE'S

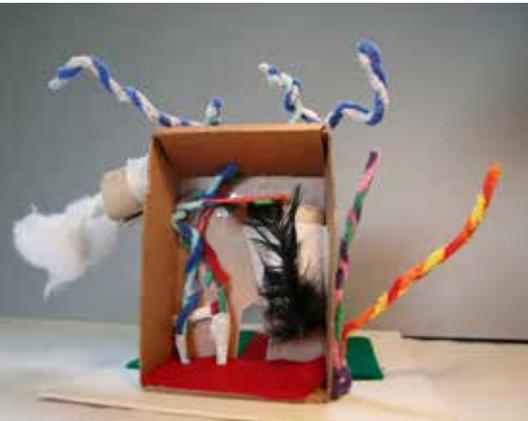
Dame Catherine Harpur's School in Ticknall is a flourishing and friendly rural school, catering for children from age 3 right up to age 11. There is a nursery class for ages 3-5 (Foundation Stage), an infant class for children aged between 4 and 7 years (Key Stage 1), and a junior section for children from 7 to 11 years of age (Key Stage 2), in two teaching groups. In each class or teaching group, there is a maximum of 15 children per teacher.

With no more than 30 children in school full time, plus a maximum of 8 children in the nursery class in any session — we offer an environment that is small enough for children to receive individual encouragement and support, yet large enough to provide them with social and intellectual stimulation and a rich variety of experiences.

The school is set in a delightful location, bordering open countryside on the outskirts of the village. Inside, there are three teaching rooms — incorporating library, music and TV areas — cloakrooms, an office and a kitchen, as well as the spacious nursery room. The grounds include a spacious playground which is used creatively by the children at break times to include scooters, go karts, football and imaginative games, as well as a smaller playground used by the nursery children.

There is also a large garden, containing fruit trees, small wildlife ponds, organic vegetable plots, activity areas, dens and quiet areas — alongside our Forest School space. This natural and safe creative playground provides a diverse and engaging resource in which to learn. Our use of the outdoor space includes recognised Forest School activities as well as adaptation and integration in all kinds of educational projects across the whole school — from history to handicrafts, literature to science.

Nearby is a large playing field and the beautiful and historic villages of Ticknall and Calke, where we have strong links with the National Trust — a great place in which to grow up and learn.



"Imagination is the source of every form of human achievement. And it's the one thing that I believe we are systematically jeopardizing in the way we educate our children and ourselves."
Ken Robinson



A LITTLE HISTORY LESSON

Dame Catherine Harpur's School was set up as a charitable trust in 1744 by benefactress Dame Catherine Harpur, to provide free education for the boys and girls of Ticknall and the surrounding parishes.

Two hundred years later, the village school was still going strong, and from 1903 was administered in partnership with Derbyshire County Council. It became a Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School and continued as such until 1987, when the LEA closed the school because of insufficient pupil numbers. There were just 12 children at that time.

At this point, the school was taken over by a group of parents and run as a parent-teacher cooperative. This reflected a desire to provide a personal and inclusive environment in which children, their families and the staff could work together. Nowadays, though, the school (which is part of an ancient trust) is run by a School Management Team, comprising the teaching staff and elected parent representatives, and is run as a limited company. In financial terms, parents now contribute a set amount each year and we all work together to keep fees as low as possible (through fundraising, skills / time donations, etc.) to ensure the school remains accessible to a wide and diverse range of families.



Headteacher, Margeret Whyte, reading a letter from the Queen!

THE TEAM

The management team

Headteacher: *Margaret A. Whyte*
Chair Person: *Mark Crouch*
Personnel/Secretary: *Jane Dawn*
Finance Coordinator:
Steve Harcourt
Recruitment & communications:
Amanda Harmer
Non-Executive: *Jose Raine,*
Julie Tibbert & Salli Gosling
Proprietor: *Dame Catherine*
Harpur's School Foundation

The teaching team

Headteacher & Key Stage 1:
Margaret A. Whyte
Key Stage 2: *Deb Bates*
Nursery: *Fay Younger*
Teaching Assistants: *Tracey Savva*
Bria Adlington

Details of the qualifications of our fully qualified teaching team are available on request.



“True education flowers at the point when delight falls in love with responsibility.”
Philip Pullman

THE NURSERY



THE NURSERY

The nursery class is set within the school and caters for up to 8 children, aged 3–5 years, at each morning and afternoon session. The nursery operates independently of the school — so there's no obligation for children to take up places in the infant class when their time comes to start school — but nursery children do sometimes join in with the activities of the older children. For example, the nursery children contribute to music time each week, and join in PE at the village hall.

Here at the nursery we aim to provide a caring, warm and friendly environment, in which the children feel safe, secure, confident and happy, encouraging all-round development at each child's own individual pace. The children who attend the nursery are encouraged to learn through carefully structured play, covering a wide variety of experiences in line with national guidelines for learning in the early years. Children are encouraged to make their own choices and decisions through the provision of some free playtimes. We also encourage children to work in small-group and whole-group activities, promoting language development and interaction with others. At the end of their time at the nursery, children will be well prepared for entry to school.

The teaching in the Nursery is enthusiastic and lively. This inspires children to be motivated and to quickly become confident learners. They remain highly focused on their learning for considerable periods of time and are making good progress...The curriculum in early years is exciting.

Ofsted Report, 2017

EARLY LEARNING GOALS

At this stage in their learning and development, the legal requirement is for children to be working within the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. These set out what most children are expected to achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage, and help people who work with children aged 3–5 years to focus on what the children need to learn. They do not comprise a curriculum with lots of different subjects, but rather describe 7 broad areas of learning, as described below. The organisation of the Early Learning Goals is based on a Highscope philosophy which encompasses both adult- and child-directed learning through play activities. This leads to independence; enabling children to make decisions and choices, and to take some control of their own learning.



Personal, social & emotional development

Your child will learn to be self-confident, take an interest in things, know about their own needs and the needs of others, tell the difference between right and wrong, and be able to dress and undress. They will make relationships and learn about managing feelings and behaviour.



Communication & language

Your child will learn to speak confidently and clearly, and enjoy listening to and telling stories, songs and poems, hearing and saying sounds and linking them to the alphabet. This development of understanding and extended periods of attention, through a range of activities and tasks, develop overall communication and language skills



Physical development

Your child will learn to move confidently, controlling their body and handling equipment, on a small and large scale; as well as an understanding of health and self-care

OFSTED reported that “the children move confidently and safely around their environment and show a good awareness of their own and others’ space. They have the opportunity to experience PE, yoga and dance as well as outdoor play with climbing equipment, bikes, bats and balls etc. The children’s fine motor skills are well developed through a wide range of tools and activities.”

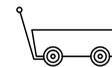
Specific areas:

Understanding the world



Your child will explore and find out about the world around them. Through practical activities, such as sowing seeds in their gardens and making good use of their rural environment, they learn about the natural world. They will build with different materials, know about everyday technology and learn what it is used for. They will find out about past, present and future events in their life and the wider community. They will find out about different cultures and beliefs.

Literacy



Starting with simple mark-making and the task of learning to hold a pencil, children develop writing skills through a number of structured and free-play activities. Reading skills develop across a range of interactions, with one-to-one and small group activities.

Mathematical development



Your child will develop an understanding of maths, through practical activities. They explore the concepts of space and measurement by comparing size, shape and capacity for example. Familiarisation with numbers and shapes develop through the creation of simple patterns and the application of their knowledge in role play situations.

Expressive Arts & Design



Your child will explore colours and shapes, textiles, models, trying out dance, music making, and acting out different roles using their imagination. They will explore, and have access to, a range of materials and media, as well as our outdoor learning space...and staff will encourage children to engage imaginatively in their interests...

Nurturing your child’s interests

Throughout all aspects of your child’s Foundation Stage they will access and make full use of our Forest School space. In addition, our small size ensures individual attention, support and nurturing for all. We can build on your child’s interests outside the nursery setting and integrate them into your day.

NURSERY ADMINISTRATION

There are two nursery sessions each day — 9.00am until 12.00 noon, and 1.00pm until 4.00pm, with an option for children to stay for lunch and therefore join us for a whole day.

Typical session routine (morning)

- 9.00 Children arrive
- 9.10 Group time — register, talk about the weather, date, any special occasions, news. Discuss the session's activities.
- 9.30 Structured play activities to choose from.
- 10.30 Tidy up and wash hands.
- 10.45 Fruit snack and drink.
- 11.00 Outdoor play.
- 11.30 Group time — story, singing, action rhymes.
Reflect on the session's activities.
- 12.00 Children are collected

Sessions are £15 each (morning or afternoon), or £36 for a full day (8.45am - 4pm) with wrap-around care from 8am - 5pm available, please contact us for details.

Parents can use childcare vouchers via an employer scheme to cover nursery and holiday club fees, as well as government nursery vouchers. These can cover a core of 15 hours (or 5 sessions) or, for those eligible families, up to 30 hours of free childcare (equivalent to 10 sessions).

Please contact us for more information.





EXCURSIONS



“Young children are wonderfully confident in their own imaginations ... Most of us lose this confidence as we grow up”
Ken Robinson



THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

KEY STAGE 1

At this stage, learning is for children aged 5 to 7 years, developed through play, building on the child's experiences in the Foundation Stage, with more formal adult-directed activities being gradually introduced. The content of the National Curriculum is drawn upon, as is the best material from other educational sources, and teaching practices include Steiner and Montessori as well as Forest School principles. Emphasis on an individual approach to learning means that formal numeracy and literacy hours are unnecessary, but key skill areas are promoted in a variety of stimulating ways. During Key Stage 1, the children's learning is focused within the key areas described on the following pages.

KEY STAGE 2

For children aged 7 to 11 years. Again, the National Curriculum is drawn upon and attainment levels are monitored. At Dame Catherine's, we do not formally test and categorise our children's abilities — we recognise that they all have different strengths, and work towards the promotion of the whole child.

During Key Stage 2, children deepen and broaden their learning within the subject areas described on the following pages, building on their experiences at Key Stage 1.

Each year parents are provided with a written report on their child's achievements. The targets on which these are based are available from school as are the level descriptors for each subject area. The school does not administer SATs.

Out-of-school trips play an important role in enriching all the children's learning. In the past, the children have visited the Ironbridge Museum to support their work on Victorians, and Isaac Newton's birthplace to explore gravity. The children have also enjoyed and benefited from a range of other activities and visits, including drama workshops, sports training and museum trips. In the summer term, the Key Stage 2 children spend a week at Gelli Iago field centre in Wales, exploring, walking and enjoying the outdoor life under careful supervision.

Children who attend Dame Catherine's find it quite easy to move to and from the school, into and out of the state and private sector, when such situations arise. Children moving at the end of Key Stage 2 into secondary education have been found to be competent, confident and independent learners in all areas. Dame Catherine's is a feeder school for Chellaston, and is part of their primary liaison group — such links help to ensure the transition to secondary education is as smooth as possible. See our website for parent stories.

CURRICULUM SUBJECT AREAS



Language & Literacy

Reading and writing skills are developed on an individual basis using principally the Oxford Reading Tree scheme, supplemented by other material. A variety of strategies are utilised on a daily basis to encourage phonic skills leading to spelling and writing development. Good handwriting is also promoted.



Mathematics

There is an emphasis on practical tasks covering the areas of shape, measure and time. Numeracy skills and knowledge are developed at the child's own pace on a daily basis utilising the Heinemann Maths Scheme and other relevant resources.



Science

The school utilises the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) schemes of work to cover areas of science on a weekly basis. Again the emphasis is on practical experiences and using the school's natural garden environment, the local area and field trips.



History & Geography

Again the QCA schemes of work are utilised, but the school has the opportunity to study areas outwith the guidelines to make use of our Forest School, the local environment, Calke Abbey, National Forest, Rosliston Forestry Centre and field trips to relevant museums and exhibitions.



Music, Art & Drama

Creative development is so important at Dame Catherine's and we consider the whole child and the need to appreciate artistic, musical and imaginative skills to encourage children's self-expression and self-esteem. In Key Stage 1, children discover the delights of music and enjoy a weekly singing session with the rest of the school. Strong emphasis is placed on art, with the exploration of different media and means of expression, and children also learn about famous artists' work. The children get plenty of opportunity for imaginative acting and every child has a part in the annual Christmas play.



ICT

All children have access to computers across the curriculum, encouraging their understanding of technology.



Physical education

The school uses the village hall (next door) for weekly PE sessions. The children get the opportunity to try a variety of different activities such as dance, yoga, gymnastics, team games and ball games. These develop their coordination, balance, ball skills and sense of fair play as well as promoting fitness. All children swim once a week, taught by qualified swimming coaches at Repton Public School swimming pool. The school holds a sports day at the end of the summer term, in which all children from nursery upwards participate.



Personal, Social, Religious & Health Education

Although the school has no particular religious affiliation, the children experience and learn about Christian beliefs, along with experiences from other cultures and religions. Understanding of different religious ideas is enhanced by role play and by visits to local churches, mosques and so on. There is no daily act of worship held, but instead the school has circle time. This is an opportunity for discussion of social, behavioural and moralistic matters as well as developing children's group participation and confidence. Regular 'show and tell' sessions, an annual pet day and other similar experiences of this kind also help to develop children's communication and listening skills. Health education is covered through science topics and the promotion of healthy eating and good hygiene practices, with additional support from the school nurse.

OTHER INFORMATION

Parents' Involvement

Parents are welcomed in the school and their help is positively encouraged both in the classroom and in other supervisory and support roles, during lunchtimes and on out-of-school trips, for example. Without the help and support of parents, a school such as ours could not continue to exist.

Through such involvement, parents benefit too – they have the opportunity to find out about how and what their child is learning, and enjoy the rewards of working with children in a creative and enthusiastic atmosphere.

The friendly and open relationship between parents and teachers encourages regular and informal dialogue about children's progress. There are also, of course, times for quiet discussion between teachers and parents, and written reports are maintained and kept at the school as a summary of a child's progress.

Parents and friends are encouraged to attend Christmas festivities, concerts, sports days and other events, as well as to take a more active role in fundraising, through the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), or as part of the Senior Management Team (SMT).





Special Needs

Dame Catherine Harpur's School uses generally established procedures when pupils are identified as having special educational needs. The small size of our classes enables us to attend to special needs in the early stages and in most cases this early response is successful. However, where the need is diagnosed as requiring more specialised attention (that is, a statement of special needs is given), then sadly the school will not be able to supply the additional resources or staff without financial support from the parents or some other agency. We do work closely with a number of specialists who provide help to individual children visiting the school and actively support and engage with their work where possible, in the classroom.

The School Policies and Disability Three Year Plan are available in the school library. These documents are available in alternative formats on request.

Behaviour

All children are expected to maintain a high standard of behaviour at all times. We encourage self-discipline, and a sense of responsibility and respect, both for themselves and others.

Pupils are encouraged in all aspects of school life with help and praise. Recognition of good work, behaviour and effort may be given in a number of ways varying from words of encouragement to the award of a special certificate from their teacher. Of course, children encounter problems and challenges but at Dame Catherine's there is usually plenty of time, space and appropriate adults to help work through them. This is helped by the fact that the close relationships between child, parent and teacher are personal rather than formal and institutional. The school has a learning agreement to reinforce a consistent approach from parents and teachers, and children also are made aware of this partnership.

Lunchtime

Due to our size, we don't have a facility for supplying hot meals on a regular basis, so all children are asked to bring a packed lunch and take home any packaging or litter arising from it (in line with the no waste policy). Jacket potatoes are however available on a Wednesday at the cost of £1 — bring your own toppings — book on the day.

ENTRY TO DAME CATHERINE HARPUR'S SCHOOL



People in all sorts of economic, family and cultural circumstances have children at Dame Catherine's and all make a different contribution to the life and support of the school.

Children of all abilities are welcome and Dame Catherine's accepts children into the school without reference to race, culture, class, gender or disability.

Children who come to Dame Catherine's with particular learning or behavioural difficulties will find that each individual is treated on their own merits. The children and parents in that particular child's class will be informed of relevant strategies and the progress of the child will be regularly reviewed by staff.

Admissions

Children are admitted to Dame Catherine's on:

- a part time basis, at the beginning of the term during which they reach four and a half, or
- a full time basis at the beginning of the term in which they reach five.

The school is flexible and, depending on the child's maturity and individual needs during the year in which they reach their fifth birthday, transition from part-time to full-time attendance can be negotiated. As we are a primary school, children can stay until the end of the school year in which they reach their eleventh birthday.

Financial Obligations

For latest school fees please see website.

Trial Day

Parents are advised that before a school place is offered their child will be expected to attend school for the day. This enables both parties to assess suitability. The cost of this is £25 and is deducted from the cost of your first term's fees. Parents are reminded that as an independent school we can not fund assessment of a child who may have additional needs. Parents would be called upon to fund this if the LEA would not.

School Hours & Holidays

The school hours are 8.55am till 4.00pm, with mid-morning break, mid-afternoon break and a lunch hour. Children are also able to access our wrap-around care with breakfast club from 8am and after-school clubs running until 5pm. We tend to follow the same holidays as South Derbyshire Education Authority.

Policies

A list of our Policies can be found on our website: damecatherines.org/school-policies/

Other information & contacts

For further information about the school please call 01332 862792, email admin@damecatherines.org or visit our website www.damecatherines.org

How to apply

In the event of the school being over subscribed, priority will be given to children in the following order:

- those children transitioning from our nursery
- those living in Calke or Ticknall villages
- brothers and sisters of those already attending
- applications in chronological order of receipt.

If you would like to make a formal application for a place at Dame Catherine's please contact us for an application form and further information.

The Admissions Coordinator,
Dame Catherine Harpur's School,
Rose Lane,
Ticknall,
Derbyshire, DE73 7JW.
Telephone 01332 862792
admin@damecatherines.org

We look forward to hearing from you!





A TYPICAL DAY





Dame Catherine Harpur's School,
Rose Lane, Ticknall,
Derbyshire, DE73 7JW
www.damecatherines.org
01332 862792



DAMECATHERINES.ORG