



ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

HEADTEACHER – MRS NICOLA CLAYTON

BA (Hons), MEd, PGCE, PRQH

Buckfast Road, Buckfast, South Devon TQ11 0EA

Tel: 01364 642389 Fax: 01364 644066

SCHOOL PROSPECTUS



ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Welcome to St. Mary's Catholic Primary School. St Mary's is a small friendly school, committed to the welfare and safeguarding of its pupils.

We encourage all children to be hard-working, polite, cheerful, and ready to help others. Our curriculum is designed to be creative, challenging, and inspiring, enabling our pupils to become independent and resilient life-long learners. Staff work in close partnership with parents/ carers and governors, to create a close and caring community.

These pages provide you with information about our school, its aims, curriculum, and activities. If you would like to find out more about the school, please contact the office to make an appointment to visit and meet the staff and children – we look forward to welcoming you.

Mrs Nicola Clayton (Head teacher)



OUR MISSION

The school community at St. Mary's seeks to provide all children with a stimulating learning environment, permeated by the Gospel values. We hope to recognise, develop, and celebrate all that is unique in everyone and strive to help all attain their full potential, in academic achievement, confidence, co-operation and responsibility.

ST MARY'S MISSION STATEMENT

Our School community seeks to build on Gospel Values to:

- Nurture and respect the talents and abilities that God has given to each unique individual.
- Enable everyone to aspire to and realise their potential through perseverance, resilience, and integrity.
- To grow in love and to be loved, unconditionally.

Some of our school services are held within Buckfast Abbey, which is within walking distance of the school. The school welcomes members of the parish to attend school events, such as the Carol Service or our Harvest celebrations. We have also developed links with our local parish churches of Buckfastleigh, Ashburton and South Brent. For example, the children have previously decorated cribs at Christmas in each of the Parish Churches and led Crib Blessings, which Parish and school community members have attended.



'Leaders have high ambitions for every pupil, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are no barriers to success in the eyes of leaders. This ambitious culture permeates the school.'

(OFSTED 2021)



'The school's mission statement to 'Build, Nurture, Enable, Respect and Love Unconditionally' underpins every activity within the school and in the wider community.' (Section 48 RE Inspection)

OUR SCHOOL

We strive to provide the best learning environment possible for our children. The school places a strong emphasis on outdoor learning for all its pupils, being perfectly situated in Dartmoor National Park. The children at St Mary's also benefit from the wealth of resources available at Buckfast Abbey Education Centre.

We also promote the use of Information Technology, giving pupils the skills and understanding needed to use technology effectively every day and in the world of work ahead. All classrooms have an interactive whiteboard and pupils benefit from using classroom computers and a suite of wireless Chromebooks and tablet computers.



A range of extra-curricular activities provide opportunities for pupils to pursue their interests in areas such as sport, music, cookery, dance and art. Our choir are also invited to sing at several community events during the year.

The school also works in conjunction with the music department at Buckfast Abbey, to offer an Abbey Chorister Programme to our Key Stage Two pupils.

LOCATION AND BUILDING

Geographically and historically, St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is said to be in an unusual and unique position. Centrally situated in the village of Buckfast, the school is the property of Buckfast Abbey, located approximately 500 metres from the Abbey itself in Dartmoor National Park. The original building dates from 1893 and has benefited from significant renovation over the years. The school has recently benefited from significant building projects, which have enhanced the facilities available at St Mary's. The school has a spacious learning environment, with a separate Early Years Foundation Stage Unit and range of outdoor learning areas including an orchard and woodland.



SCHOOL STRUCTURE

The school has six classes, taking children aged 3 to 11 years old. The six classes are Meldon, Venford, Avon, Roadford, Fernworthy and Burrator, which are named after reservoirs in Dartmoor National Park. We have the benefit of small class sizes and each class is supported by experienced teaching assistants.

ADMISSIONS

The school has two admissions policies—one for the Foundation Stage Unit and one for pupils aged 4 years and above, which has been approved by Devon Local Authority. A copy of both policies is available on the school website, or a hard copy can be obtained from the school office upon request.

EARLY YEARS

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we welcome children from 3-11 years old. Our pre-school Foundation Stage children join Meldon Class and are taught by a trained teacher.

We offer a range of sessions to suit you and your child. Foundation Stage sessions run from 8.45-12.00am in the mornings, and 12.00pm until 3.15pm in the afternoons, five days a week. Children attending a session between 12.00pm and 1.00pm can choose to bring a packed lunch, or order a school meal which can be arranged by speaking to the school office and booking through Parent Pay online.

Our approach recognises the very best practice in Early Years education, ensuring a safe, happy and secure environment for children to learn, develop and grow. Children move through the Foundation Stage at their own pace, working within the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. In line with the rest of the school pupils experience a topic-themed curriculum, which in the early years focuses on learning through play.



THE SCHOOL'S CATCHMENT AREA

The school has a wide catchment area attracting pupils from Totnes, Torbay, Ashburton, South Brent, Ivybridge, Buckfastleigh and other outlying districts. A few of our pupils are transported to school by bus or taxi and there are opportunities for subsidised transport (further information can be obtained from the school).

LINKS WITH OTHER EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

As our pupils may come from other Early Years' settings, or child minders, we take every opportunity to develop links between the school and these providers. Our Year 6 pupils transfer to various secondary schools every year, so there is a carefully managed programme of transition work for all pupils to enable a successful transfer. Our secondary school links also enable our pupils to take part in a range of curriculum activities. For example, South Dartmoor Community College offers an RE award to pupils and Ivybridge Community College has previously worked with St Mary's to provide gymnastics coaching.

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S (FOSMS)

The Friends of St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is a group of parents who actively take part in the life of the school. Their aim is to advance the quality of the education at St Mary's, through fundraising, social events and providing new equipment and enrichment activities for the pupils.

CURRICULUM INFORMATION

The curriculum is underpinned by a Christian understanding of life and our Mission Statement, which requires the Gospel values to permeate the life of the school.

We aim to:

- Provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum, corresponding to the experience and need of our pupils.
- Encourage our pupils to develop lively and enquiring minds, together with positive attitudes toward learning and a spirit of questioning and exploration.
- Enable pupils to develop language, literacy, mathematic and scientific skills to their full potential.
- Help pupils understand the world in which they live, looking at its context, value, form as well as getting them to appreciate the interdependence of individuals, groups, and nations.
- Help pupils appreciate human achievement and aspirations in art, music, science, literature, sport, and technology.
- Encourage a healthy response to their physical, spiritual, moral, and creative development so that they experience a high level of self-esteem,

dignity, and purpose.

- Enable pupils to acquire knowledge and skills relevant to, life, in an ever growing and changing world.
- Foster growth in every way to Christian maturity, to value others and be valued as unique individuals in the community.

BRITISH VALUES

St Mary's Catholic Primary school actively seeks to promote and uphold British values through its ethos, curriculum, liturgy, and assemblies, aiming to educate and engage with pupils about equality, human rights, and inclusion in a positive and pro-active way.

EARLY YEARS

When children first join the school, they follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum from 3 years of age. The curriculum promotes play based learning through exploration. As children progress through Year 1 and achieve all elements of the EYFS, they start to access the National Curriculum. This lays down what should be taught by every school during compulsory schooling from Y1 to Y13. The following subjects are known as the 'core' subjects and will have more time devoted to them than the others.

ENGLISH

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, we believe that literacy develops the important skills of reading and writing, speaking, and listening, discussion and reflection. In addition to high quality teaching, we aim to foster an interest in this subject area by ensuring that pupils can participate in a range of enrichment activities, such as 'Poetry Week' and 'World Book Day.'

MATHEMATICS

St Mary's has a clear and comprehensive approach to mathematics, ensuring progression and continuity through the different year groups. We aim to teach our children to think logically, be able to use and apply their knowledge confidently in everyday life and to appreciate and enjoy mathematics.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education plays a vital role throughout the curriculum as it is central to the whole ethos of the school. We use the 'Come and See' RE programme of work, to give children the opportunity to explore the Catholic faith, whilst encouraging respect and tolerance of other religions and cultures. In line with other schools in Plymouth Diocese, Reception and Year 3 are using the new Religious Education Directory this academic year. We give daily opportunity for the children to take part in prayer and collective worship.

SCIENCE

Our science curriculum aims to give children the experience of a wide range of practical work as well as developing scientific skills and attitudes. As a result of this, the school was awarded the Primary Science Mark. Scientific activities may be taught through individual or group work in order that the children may discover the answers to questions. The school's grounds are used as outdoor classrooms when an appropriate topic is being studied, and the children are taught how to use scientific equipment and IT safely to support their learning. Through our science curriculum, we also aim to foster responsible attitudes towards the environment and all living things.

BUILDING LEARNING POWER (BLP)

Throughout all our learning at St Mary's, pupils are encouraged to develop and become more aware of their learning and in turn, become more effective learners. Pupils are awarded BLP certificates each week in the Achievement Assembly for developing their learning skills.

FOUNDATION SUBJECTS

The following subjects are known as the 'foundation' subjects: Computing, Design Technology (DT), History, Geography, Art & Design, Music, Physical Education (PE), Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Citizenship and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). These are still taught as discrete disciplines with individual curriculum objectives.



This is in line with evidence from research which shows that children make the best progress when they can make links in their learning. Our curriculum programme also allows us to respond to children's interests and enable them to pursue themes that interest them. Details of the curriculum being taught each term is sent home to parents/ carers at the beginning of each new term.



PSHE and RSE

PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) is an important element of the curriculum and includes everything schools do to promote pupils' good health and well-being. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) forms an integral part of this. This programme is a developmental process, which is sensitively delivered through PSHE and science, growing in depth according to each year group. The school uses a programme called 'Life to the Full.' Parents/ carers are invited to look at the materials for this programme annually. Please contact the headteacher if you have any concerns.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

At St Mary's, we believe that personal development and well-being are essential and therefore a priority throughout a child's life. If a child feels safe and secure at school, everything else that is important in education follows. Our older pupils are encouraged to take an active part in school life at St Mary's by becoming Prefects, Mental Health Ambassadors and School Councillors. All Year 5 and 6 pupils become 'buddies' for the younger pupils. This might include organising games or activities and ensuring fellow pupils are happy during break times and lunchtimes. We also have a very active School Council and Eco Committee. The school has been awarded the Green Flag Eco Award and the Live Simply Award, in recognition of the environmental work carried out by pupils. Last year pupils worked on a recycling project in conjunction with Devon Sustainability.

Children at St Mary's are encouraged to think of others and raise money for charities each term. The school supports several charities, which are often chosen by our School Council. Year 6 also take part in awards such as the Torbay and Devon Civic Award and Faith in Action Award, which require an element of fund raising and community work to be undertaken by the pupils.

PUNCTUALITY AND ATTENDANCE

Please let the school know if your child is going to be absent at the start of the school day (01364 642389) or admin@st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk.

Regular and punctual attendance is a legal requirement and essential in helping children make the most of the learning opportunities available to them. The school monitors attendance closely with the Educational Welfare Officer and has a number of incentives and rewards for good attendance. For example, individual pupils receive certificates each term for achieving over 97% attendance.

School starts at 8.45am and every pupil is expected to be at school before this time. If your child is just 5 minutes late every day, this equates to missing an hour of school each week, which is over 3 hours a month. Children who arrive late often feel anxious and unsettled about joining the class once the school day has begun, which can affect their concentration for a significant part of the morning.

Learning takes place every day, with teachers planning lessons that build on what the children have already learnt. Missing time from these lessons will leave gaps in knowledge and understanding, which could place children at a disadvantage. Missing a week from school will mean missing about 5 hours of literacy, 5 hours of maths, and 2 hours of science, to name but a few subjects.

Whilst it is accepted that illness is something that cannot be avoided, there are things we can do to limit the amount of school that is missed. If your child needs to attend an appointment during the school day, it would be better for these to be booked during the afternoon. If this is not possible, please try to bring your child back to school after their appointment so that they do not miss out on a whole day's learning.

SCHOOL STAFF

HEADTEACHER

Mrs Nicola Clayton – SENCo/ Designated Safeguarding Lead/ R.E

CLASS TEACHERS

Meldon (Reception)

Mrs Kayleigh Teeder — Early Years, Science

Venford (Y1)

Mrs Coralie Cherrett (Monday–Tuesday) – History

Mrs Jessica Hutchinson (Wednesday–Friday) – Literacy/ Art/ D.T.

Avon (Y2)

Miss Rebecca Blackhall – Maths/ Computing

Roadford (Y3)

Miss Lesley Haworth (Monday, Tuesday) – PSHE/ RSE

Mrs Kerry Manley (Wednesday–Friday)

Fernworthy – (Y4/5)

Mrs Sophie Kerswell – MFL/ Music/ P.E./ Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Burrator – (Y5/6)

Miss Josephine Keir – Geography

SUPPORT STAFF

Mrs Jo Allen

Miss Meghan Ashplant

Mrs Danielle Binmore

Mrs Kathryn Bradford

Mrs Judith Contrasti

Miss Linda Farrington

Mrs Lucy Field

Mrs Stephanie Gibbs

Mrs Tracy Owen

Mrs Louise Perrins

Mrs Bernice Perryman

Mrs Karen Sparks

Miss Annabel Stubbs

Miss Andrea Whitefoot

ADMINISTRATORS

Mrs Laura Vallance – Senior Administrative Officer

Mrs Ania Walker – Assistant Administrator

LUNCHTIME STAFF

Mrs Linda Collins

Mr Sean Teague

PARISH PRIEST

Fr Francis Straw

SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Mrs Lesley Clark Chair of Governors (Foundation Governor)

Mr Mark Norman Vice-Chair of Governors (Foundation Governor,
Safeguarding governor)

Mrs Rachel Ellacott (Foundation Governor)

Mr Gregory Lippiatt (Foundation Governor)

Mrs Christine Marshall (Foundation Governor)

Mr Matthew Searles (Foundation Governor)

Mrs Samantha Ansell (Parent Governor)

Miss Lesley Haworth (Staff Governor)

Mrs Mary Waterman (Clerk to Governors)

The Head teacher is also a governor.

TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES

AUTUMN TERM 2023

Tuesday 5th September – Friday 15th December inclusive

Half term

Monday 23rd October – Monday 30th October inclusive

Pupils return Tuesday 31st October

SPRING TERM 2024

Wednesday 3rd January – Thursday 28th March inclusive

Half term

Monday 12th February – Monday 19th February inclusive

Pupils return Tuesday 20th February

SUMMER TERM 2024

Monday 15th April – Friday 26th July inclusive

Bank holiday Monday 6th May

Half term

Monday 27th May – Monday 3rd June inclusive

Pupils return Tuesday 4th June

The following are non-pupil days

Monday 4th September 2023

Monday 30th October 2023

Tuesday 2nd January 2024

Monday 19th February 2024

Monday 3rd June 2024

EMERGENCY CLOSURE

Occasionally, due to severe winter weather the school may have to close. Parents/ carers will be contacted by email. This information will also be posted onto the school website. Local radio stations will also be informed of any school closure.



SCHOOL TIMES

MORNING ARRIVAL

The school gate is opened at 8.30am and pupils can go straight into their classrooms on arrival.

Morning session

8.45am-12.15pm

Morning break

10.30-10.50am

Lunchtime

12.15pm-1.15pm

Afternoon session

1.15pm-3.30pm (3.15pm for younger children – see details below)

END OF DAY ARRANGEMENTS

At the end of the day, pupils are currently escorted to the school gates by staff where they can be collected by parents/ carers. Pupils from Meldon, Venford and Avon finish school at 3.15pm whilst those in Roadford, Fernworthy and Burrator finish at 3.30pm. Younger children with older siblings and those who use school transport also finish school at 3.30pm. Please let the office know if there are changes to a pupil's normal collection arrangements. If a pupil has not been collected by 3.45pm the child is taken to wait outside the school office. If after 4.45pm, the school has not been able to contact parents/ carers, the school will inform Devon Social Services through the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) team.

LUNCH AND BREAK TIMES

At breaktimes on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday the children can purchase items from the School Tuck Shop, costing 50p per item. Children in Foundation Stage Unit and Key Stage 1 are also offered a piece of fruit as a snack each day. If your child would like to bring in their own snack for break time, please ensure that it is a healthy snack e.g., fruit, or cereal bar. Fizzy drinks, sweets, chocolate bars or snacks containing chocolate are not permitted at break time. Children also have access to drinking water in school throughout the school day.

School meals are free for pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1. If your child is in another year group and you wish to purchase a school meal. All meals must be booked online using Parent Pay. Please speak to someone in the school office if you are interested in finding out more about how this works.

School lunch menus are sent home each half term/ term via email. They also appear on the school website. School meals are available free to families receiving certain income benefits – further information can be obtained from this website: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/support-schools-settings/administration-and-finance/administration/free-school-meals/>. Alternatively, children may bring a packed lunch to eat. Healthy packed lunch suggestions are promoted through the school's newsletters and website.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

All children are expected to wear the school uniform which is:

- a royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan
- dark grey trousers or grey skirt
- white polo shirt
- grey socks
- black shoes or boots.

In the summer, pupils may wear:

- a blue and white checked dress or;
- grey shorts and white polo shirt
- black closed toe sandals

Watches and small stud earrings are permitted, but for safety reasons jewellery must be removed (or earrings taped) for P.E. lessons. Hair accessories must be discrete and brown/ black or school colours.

For P.E lessons children wear a pale blue t-shirt, navy, or black shorts and plimsoles or trainers. In the winter months, jogging bottoms or leggings may be worn for outside lessons instead of shorts. Pupils are asked to come into school in PE kits on the days that they currently have PE.

Uniform items specific to St. Mary's Catholic Primary School can ordered online through Brigade Clothing

<http://www.brigade.uk.com/direct/index.php> There are a limited number of items available through the school office. Other non-specific items are readily available from various retailers.

GENERAL INFORMATION

HOME LEARNING AND HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT

Parents/ carers are asked to sign a Home School Agreement at the start of the academic year, outlining the aims for the partnership between the parents/ carers, pupils, and staff at St Mary's. All classes are set home learning throughout the school in accordance with government guidelines and the school's home learning policy, which is available on the school website, or from the school office.

RELIGIOUS WORSHIP

As St. Mary's is a Catholic School, faith permeates all levels of school life. Mass is celebrated in the school hall or Buckfast Abbey and parents/ carers are usually invited to attend.

HEALTH AND PASTORAL CARE

All members of staff hold Emergency First Aid qualifications and four members of staff have been trained in Paediatric First Aid. We also take the emotional well-being of our pupils very seriously and currently employ a school councillor/ play therapist to help support social and emotional development.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

At St Mary's the health, safety and well-being of every child is taken very seriously. To promote a safe environment for pupils, our selection and recruitment policy makes checks on all staff and regular volunteers' suitability, including Disclosure and Barring Service checks, in accordance with current legislation.

MEDICINES

We can administer medicine, both prescribed and non-prescribed. Please fill in a consent form from the school office (also available on the school website).

EQUALITY POLICY

The primary aim of St Mary's Catholic Primary School is to enable all pupils to take part as fully as possible in every part of school life. The school will take steps to advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations and eliminate discrimination or harassment across all the protected characteristics within the school community. A copy of the Equality Objectives can be accessed via the school website or obtained from the school office.

INSPECTION

The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) inspects all schools about every four years. We were last inspected in November 2021 and received a very positive report; we were judged to be a 'good' school. You can view or download our inspection reports from the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

St. Mary's is a truly inclusive school and recognises the unique worth of every child. It adheres to the SEN Code of Practice (2014) and reflects the 'Every Child Matters' agenda to ensure that every child is happy at school and that their potential is fulfilled.

HIGH ACHIEVING PUPILS

St Mary's encourages and celebrates the talents of all its pupils. Our weekly Achievement Assemblies enable pupils to share their successes outside school, e.g., in sports and music. The school also identifies pupils with high achievement in a particular curriculum area and looks for enrichment opportunities for these pupils both in and out of school.

BEHAVIOUR

There are rewards and sanctions to support children in their behaviour. Details of these are displayed around the school and can be found in our behaviour policy, which is available on the school website or from the school office.

ASSESSMENT

Teacher assessment in the core subjects of Mathematics, English, RE and Science takes place on a continuous basis, to inform the planning of work for individuals and small groups of children. Foundation subjects are also

assessed throughout the year. Statutory assessment takes place in:
Reception – Baseline Assessment
Year 1 – Phonics screening
Year 4 – Multiplication Check
Year 6 – SATs (Statutory Assessment Tests)

VISITS

The school takes every opportunity to offer a range of enrichment activities to all pupils during the year. Visits and themed days are offered each year across the school, to enhance a range of different curriculum areas. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 take part in an 'Activities week' every other year, involving a residential stay, usually based at Grangehurst Residential Centre in Dartmoor National Park.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS

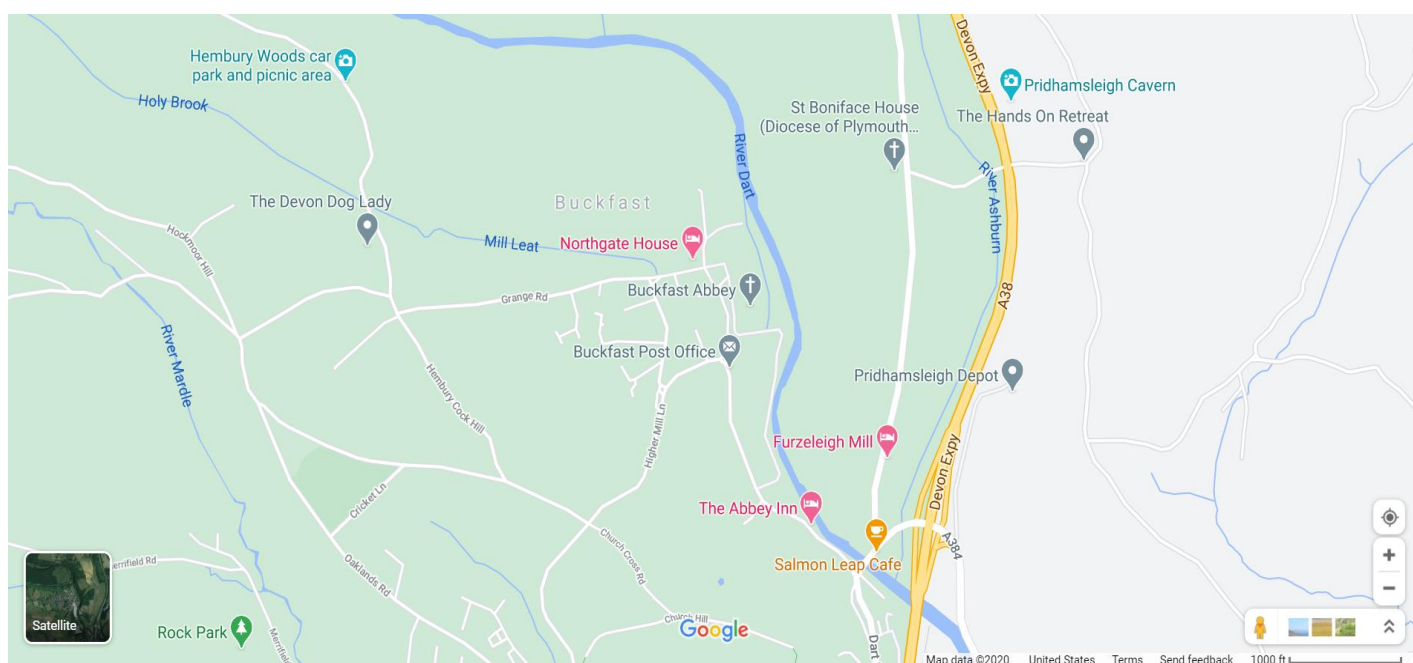
The photographer visits the school twice a year; in the Autumn term to take individual or family group photographs and in the Summer term to take class photographs. There is no obligation to purchase photographs, but if you wish to do so, these can be ordered and paid for online. There are also occasions when children may be photographed for use on the school website or for school publicity purposes. Each parent is consulted at the start of the year about whether they are happy for this to happen.

COMPLAINTS

Whilst we hope that you will always be happy at our school, there may be occasions where you wish to discuss a matter further. We are always happy to listen to parents' comments as they may help us to develop a better understanding of our school community.

In the first instance, we would hope that all complaints could be dealt with by talking to the Class Teacher or the Head Teacher. Where a parent feels they have not had their issue resolved, then the school complaints procedure should be followed. A copy of this is available from the school office or on the school website.

HOW TO FIND US



ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
HEADTEACHER – MRS NICOLA CLAYTON
BA (HONS), MEd, PGCE, PRQH

Buckfast Road, Buckfast, South Devon TQ11 OEA
Tel: 01364 642389 Fax: 01364 644066

