

# Our Parents Handbook



*Let all that you do be done in love 1 Corinthians 16:14*

## Contents Page

3	Introduction	16	Dinner Money Debt
4	Child Protection Guidance	17	Free School Meals
4	Parent Support	17	Packed Lunches
5	Senior Staff & Governors	17	Home Dinners
6	Birmingham Term Dates	18	Lunchtime Supervisors
7	Our School Day	18	Breakfast Club
7	Attendance	19	Tuck Arrangements
8	Leave of Absence	21	Trips
8	Punctuality	21	Charging & Remissions
9	Staying in Touch	22	Health & Medicine
10	Parent Code of Conduct	23	Anti-Bullying Policy
11	Sharing Information	24	Useful Numbers
12	Our School Uniform		
13	Nearly New Uniform		
14	PE Kit		
14	Personal Property		
15	Clubs		
16	School Dinners		

## INTRODUCTION

### *Welcome to the St James Family*

We have produced this Handbook to help parents understand how we operate as a school. We hope it contains all the information you need to ensure that you and your child have a successful, happy and settled time at St James.

Inside this book we will show you clear guidance on routines and processes that help us to be organised within the school.

We believe this Parent Handbook, along with the School Prospectus, will tell you what St James School is all about and the work that we do here. I have worked at this school since 2006 as a Class Teacher and now Head Teacher - I am committed to ensuring all children access learning and that we work in partnership with families to ensure children feel loved and able to achieve their very best. The school vision is deeply rooted in all our decisions. Our curriculum is engaging and children talk about their learning with huge excitement.

If you require further information, more detailed copies of our most important policies can be found on our school website

[www.stjamesce.bham.sch.uk](http://www.stjamesce.bham.sch.uk)

If you would prefer to talk with a member of staff in person to help you with any information that you need, please contact the school office and a member of staff will make contact with you.

Once your child starts school you will find members of the leadership team on the playground in the morning and afternoon to support you with any queries.

Please say hello

Kind Regards

Mrs Sarah Smith



## **CHILD PROTECTION GUIDANCE FOR OUR PARENTS**

Your children's safety and well-being is our primary concern. Only if they are safe and well, will they be able to be properly happy and settled in school and fully access the learning opportunities that we can offer them.

Being a parent / carer is one of the hardest jobs in the world! If you are having difficulties coping with your child, please feel free to come and speak confidentially with Miss Cross, Mrs Pritchard or Mrs Buckle, as there is a wealth of support available to you and your child. We are able to link parents with agencies like Malachi Trust, Family Support Workers, Parent Support Advisers, Forward Thinking Birmingham, the School Nurse, the Housing Department and the No Recourse to Public Funds Team amongst others. Where difficulties occur, we are very keen to work in partnership with you to find solutions.

At St. James, our staff recognise that we have very clear Safeguarding & Child Protection duties to perform to make sure that all of our children are well cared for. We know that sometimes difficulties occur in families and homes, which mean that for a period of time a child becomes less safe. There are many, many different reasons for this. We are here to support you and identify ways in which other professionals can help as well.

A copy of the school policy is always available upon request from the school or it is available on the school website. On the website you can find more information about organisations that can help.

### **PARENT SUPPORT**

As part of our work in partnership with parents our school leaders (Mrs Smith, Mrs Pritchard, Mrs Hanson and Mrs Matthews) and our Inclusion Team (Ms. Buckle (Learning Mentor), and Miss Pilgrim) are on hand to listen to you, if you have any concerns about yourself or your children.

We will aim to link you with appropriate support for either yourself or your child.

## OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

### SENIOR STAFF

HEAD TEACHER    DEPUTY HEAD    DEPUTY HEAD    ASSISTANT HEAD

Mrs S. Smith    Mrs J. Hanson    Mrs J. Pritchard    Mrs R. Matthews



### OUR SCHOOL GOVERNORS

CHAIRPERSON

Mrs. M. Hare

VICE CHAIRPERSON

Father Douglas

#### Foundation Governors (appointed by Birmingham Diocese)

Dr K. Sahota, Father C. Pascal, Vacancy

#### Parent Governors (elected by our parents)

Ms. J. Elliot & Mrs. M. Howard

#### Community Governors (appointed by Governing Body)

Mrs. M. Hare, Mrs. S. Banger, Ms. Z. Jackson

#### Local Authority Governors (appointed by the Local Authority)

Miss. R. Wilson-McIntosh

#### Associate Governor (appointed by Governing Body)

None at present

#### Staff Governors

Mrs. S. Smith (Head Teacher) & Mrs. J. Pritchard (Deputy Head)

Our governors help decide school policies and ensure that our school is run effectively and efficiently.

Our Parent Governors are elected by you. If you would like to become one of our Parent Governor at St. James, our Wednesday Newsletter will tell you of any vacancies and elections. We are keen to keep our Parent Governor positions filled.

## **BIRMINGHAM LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOL YEAR 2025 - 2026**

*\*Please note 5 Teacher Training days will be added to the calendar*

### **Autumn Term 2025**

- Term Starts: Monday 1 September 2025
- Half Term: Monday 27 October 2025 to Friday 31 October 2025
- Term Ends: Friday 19 December 2025

### **Spring Term 2026**

- Term Starts: Monday 5 January 2026
- Half Term: Monday 16 February 2026 to Friday 20 February 2026
- Term Ends: Friday 27 March 2026

### **Summer Term 2026**

- Term Starts: Monday 13 April 2026
- Half Term: Monday 25 May 2026 to Friday 29 May 2026
- Term Ends: Monday 20 July 2026

## **SAINT JAMES SCHOOL CALENDAR 2025 - 2026**

In September, you will be provided with the school calendar for the year ahead. Updates are provided every fortnight, in the Wednesday News (the school's newsletter) and via the school's website.

## SCHOOL START AND FINISH TIMES

### ☺ Come in For "Chill & Chat" Time ☺

Children can come into school from 8.45am for 'Chill & Chat' time with their friends. They are supervised by their class teachers and teaching assistants.

Please make sure that your child does not arrive at school too early, unless they are attending Breakfast Club. This is open to all children from Reception to Year 6. If you would like any more information about the Breakfast Club, please speak to the office staff.

All children must be in school for 8.55am.

- Reception - Children go through their classroom doors via the Reception playground.
- Year 1 & 2 - Children go through their classroom doors via the main playground.
- Years 3/4/5 & 6 - Children go through the doors from the playground at either end of the right-hand side of the school building.

At the end of the school day, Reception, Y1 & Y2 children can be collected from their classrooms. They must be picked up by an adult. Junior children can be collected from the main playground.

## ATTENDANCE

### Every Child Should Be In School Every Day Unless They Are Too Ill To Come

The law states that children must attend school every day. If your child is going to be absent from school, it is essential that you contact the school. The best way is to either leave a message on the answer machine (option 1) or phone the school office between 8.00am and

8.45am to speak to a member of staff. If we are not given a reason for the absence, then it will show on your child's record as unauthorised.

We really care for all of our children at St James, so, if we are really worried that your child is regularly not in school, we will arrange a meeting with you. We may also occasionally come and visit you at home. We are always willing to help you with any problems you may have.

If we are concerned about your child's attendance, an attendance meeting will be arranged with Mrs Pritchard & Mrs Sagoo.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME**

### No Holidays Will Be Authorised

#### In Term Time

The Local Authority sets the dates of the school holidays. Children are given approximately 13 weeks of school holidays every year. The dates for these holidays are given to the parents at the start of each year ready for the next year and parents can find the holiday dates for the next two years from school or from the Local authority website.

We ask all parents to arrange their family holidays during the school holidays, because school will not authorise for holidays to be taken during term time. The Local Authority may issue you with a Penalty Notice of £80 per parent per child.

If you need Leave of Absence for your child during the school term for exceptional circumstances, e.g. a family bereavement, please come and talk to us in school. We will ask you to complete a Leave of Absence Request Form, giving as much information as possible. This is for safeguarding reasons so we know where you are going, the address of where you will be staying, and contact numbers for whilst you are away. We will ask you to keep this trip as short as possible.

Children's attendance is monitored closely each term. At the end of the academic year, the children who have achieved attendance above 97% will be treated to a Rewards Day.

## PUNCTUALITY



Wake Up On Time . . .  
Get To School For 8:45am

Please organise your start of the day routines so that you get your child to school so that children can enjoy their social time in Chill & Chat from 8.45am and be ready for registration at 8.55am.

We leave the school gates open between 8.55am and 9.00am to allow children who arrive late to make their way to class *but* after 8.55am, they are officially late and have to be marked late on the register.

Any child arriving after 9.25am will be marked down as a 'U' code "late after registration closes" and, although they are in school, their late mark counts as an absence. If your child is continuously late, a meeting will be arranged with Mrs Pritchard & Mrs Sagoo.

## STAYING IN TOUCH

☺ Please Give Us Your Contact Details ☺

It is vital that you fill out your child's contact form in detail, when your child starts at St James. We need accurate and up-to-date contact numbers in case your child is ill, has an accident or to allow us to get in touch with you in an emergency. If you change your contact details, please collect a 'change of details form' from the school office so that we can update your child's record.

In rare cases of serious accident or illness, if we are unable to contact a parent or guardian, then the Head Teacher has the legal right to act in place of the parent and give permission for any necessary treatment.



We now have an emergency texting system, so that we can send messages out to you quickly. This will make it even more important that we have your correct contact details, especially your mobile phone number.



## Parents Code of conduct

At St. James Church of England Primary School, we are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent body. Our parents recognise that educating children is a process that involves partnership between parents, school staff and the school community. As a partnership, our parents will understand the importance of a good working relationship to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. For these reasons we welcome and encourage parents/carers to participate fully in the life of our school.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our school about the expected conduct. This is so we can continue to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

### Guidance

**As well as following the guidance set out in our Home-School Agreement, we expect parents, carers and visitors to:**

- Respect the caring ethos of our school
- Understand that teachers, school staff and parents need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- Demonstrate that **all** members of the school community should be treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and behaviour.
- Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.

- Correct own child's behaviour especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive behaviour or unsafe behaviour.
- Approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern.
- Avoid using staff as threats to admonish children's behaviour.
- **Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the Class Teacher, the Head Teacher or the Chair of Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.**

**In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment the school cannot tolerate parents, carers and visitors exhibiting the following:**

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom, an employee's office, office area or any other area of the school grounds including team matches.
- Using loud/or offensive language, swearing, cursing, using profane language or displaying temper.
- Threatening to do actual bodily harm to a member of school staff, Governor, visitor, fellow parent/carer or pupil regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence.
- Damaging or destroying school property.
- Abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils/parent/staff, at the school on Facebook or other social sites. (See Appendix 1). Any concerns you may have about the school must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, the Head teacher or the Chair of Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child on school premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences).
- Smoking and consumption of alcohol or other drugs whilst on school property.
- Dogs being brought on to school premises.

Should **any** of the above behaviour occur on school premises the school may feel it is necessary to contact the appropriate authorities and if necessary, even ban the offending adult from entering the school grounds. We trust that parents and carers will assist our school with the implementation of this policy and we thank you for your continuing support of the school.

**Agreed by Governors May 2018**

## **SHARING INFORMATION**

We are very keen that parents have all of the information that they need to help them to support their children's learning. To help with this we make sure that:

- ✓ All of the most important school policies are on the school website ([www.stjamesce.bham.sch.uk](http://www.stjamesce.bham.sch.uk))
- ✓ A detailed Newsletter is sent home every fortnight
- ✓ Parents can follow what is happening in school on Twitter ([St James CofE Primary School \(@stjamesb21\) / Twitter](https://twitter.com/stjamesb21))
- ✓ We send text messages to the child's primary contact, to communicate across and remind parents about special days and events taking place in school.
- ✓ Termly Parents' & Carers Meetings are held to discuss your child's learning
- ✓ You receive a detailed School Report in July

## OUR SCHOOL UNIFORM

At St James we are proud of our school uniform. We feel that uniform benefits the school because:

- ✓ It helps our children to have a sense of identity and feel included in their school
- ✓ Children do not compete to have the latest clothes or trainers
- ✓ It encourages a working atmosphere in the school
- ✓ On school visits it is easily recognisable
- ✓ It is inexpensive and readily available

Our main uniform colour is bottle green worn together with a white shirt or polo t-shirt, grey trousers/skirt/pinafore dress and black shoes.

**NB Earrings must not be worn in school - a simple stud is permitted but children should be able to remove them for physical activities or they may not be able to participate.**

### **GIRLS' "WINTER" UNIFORM**

- Grey skirt / trousers / shalwaar
- White blouse / Polo T-Shirt
- School tie (not compulsory)
- School sweatshirt / jumper / kameeze
- Black shoes (no trainers)



### **GIRLS' "SUMMER" UNIFORM**

- Grey skirt / trousers / shalwaar
- White short sleeved blouse / Polo T-Shirt
- Green & white chequered dress
- Green & white kameeze
- Black shoes (no trainers)



## **BOYS' "WINTER" UNIFORM**

- Grey trousers
- White shirt / Polo T-Shirt
- School tie (not compulsory)
- School sweatshirt / jumper
- Black shoes (no trainers)



## **BOYS' "SUMMER" UNIFORM**

- Grey trousers / shorts
- White short sleeved shirt / Polo T-Shirt
- Black shoes (no trainers)



## **NEARLY NEW SCHOOL UNIFORM**

A stock of freshly cleaned but unwanted school uniform is kept in school and can be taken, completely free of charge.

## **PE Kit**

P.E. is a compulsory part of the primary school curriculum. P.E. kit must always be worn for P.E. lessons to ensure hygiene and safety.

Children should bring their fully labelled kit to school on their P.E. day - if they have an afternoon session they will be able to go home in their kit and take their uniform home in their bag.

## **INDOOR P.E.**

A pair of black or navy shorts, a plain white t-shirt or polo t-shirt and indoor pumps. Please label everything - especially the pumps!



Children will be asked to remove religious jewellery for P.E. and any children who wear stud earrings must remove them on P.E days. If they can't remove them, they will not be able to participate in P.E.

**\*Children not dressed in the appropriate kit may be withdrawn from the lesson.**

### **OUTDOOR GAMES**

For outdoor games children need a pair of outdoor pumps or trainers and a warm jumper or tracksuit if possible.

### **SWIMMING**

Year 4 need a swimming costume, a swimming cap and towel. Swimming shorts must not reach past the bottom of the thigh.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Valubles should not be brought into school. We teach our children at St James to respect others' property as well as their own. We cannot take responsibility for loss or damage to children's personal possessions. All belongings should be clearly labelled with the child's full name.

Each classroom has an area with pegs, for children to hang their coats and bags.

All lost property is taken to a clothes rack that is kept by the far end of the Infant corridor. Any unclaimed property is donated to the local charity shop and uniform is kept in school to use as spares.

### **CLUBS**

One of the things our children really like about school is the variety of clubs that we run. These are led by external coaches, as well as our teachers, teaching assistants and members of our Inclusion Team.

The Clubs are rotated each term, so that all children have the opportunity to attend. They run from 3:30-4:30pm All we ask is that parents and carers collect their children on time to allow the clubs to work well.

## **SCHOOL DINNERS - SCHOOL MONEY ONLINE**

We are a cashless school and use the School Money system for the school dinners, Breakfast Club and trip payments.

Once your child starts at St James, you will be issued with a temporary password which will need to be changed once you have logged in.

The information required to login is the child's name, parent/carer 1 mobile number, parent/carer 1 email address and the password that has been set by you.

For ease of access, you can download the Teachers2Parents app.

Parents are advised to top up their child's account before ordering their child's meal, so that there is no debt on the account. This should preferably be done at the start of the week.

If you have any debts on the account a reminder text and email will be sent out on Friday.

St James school dinners are nutritious and have to meet high standards. They are cooked in the school kitchen and are based upon Birmingham's healthy eating recommendations. Children are given a choice at every mealtime and there is always a vegetarian option. If a child has any dietary requirements due to religious or health reasons, we will work hard to meet their needs.

## **SELECT**

We have recently introduced an online food ordering service, where you need to select your child's meals for the week. Each parent will receive a unique code when they start at St James'.

## **DINNER MONEY DEBT**

We cannot allow dinner money debts to accumulate above two weeks. Please come and talk to us if you are struggling with payments and we can set up a payment plan.

The Dinner Money Debt Policy can be viewed on the school website.

## FREE MEALS

If you think your child may be entitled to free school meals then please complete a form in the school office and Mrs Sagoo can make an application on your behalf. Alternatively, you can apply online at [www.link2ict.org/FSM](http://www.link2ict.org/FSM).

It is very important that you let us know that your child is entitled to free school meals; even if your child does not take them, because a part of the funding for the school is based upon how many children are entitled to free school meals. It helps to know of all children who are entitled, as it serves every child at St James.

## PACKED LUNCHES

### Make Your Child's Packed Lunch Healthy

Some parents like to provide their children with a packed lunch. We are working hard to be a healthy school and so we encourage those parents to provide a healthy, nutritious lunch for their children and not to put sweet and sticky goodies in their child's lunch box. We feel that this is bad for their teeth and can attract insects. Could you please put your child's lunch in a sturdy, clearly named container. Water is provided at lunchtime, so there is little need to provide any drinks for your child.

#### "Healthy"

A healthy packed lunch should include



#### "Unhealthy"

A packed lunch should avoid



Source: Food Standards Agency

## **HOME DINNERS**

To ensure the safety of the children, those who stay in school for dinner are not allowed to leave the school grounds.

Children who go home for lunch must be collected from the main entrance and must not be taken from school until an adult from St James is informed. Children must be collected promptly and must return to school before the start of afternoon registration.

## **OUR LUNCHTIME SUPERVISORS**

Our hard working lunchtime supervisors do a very difficult job. They look after our children during lunchtime and keep them safe. They also provide first aid cover and activities for our children.

If your child behaves in an unacceptable manner during lunchtime then they are reported to our Senior Supervisors. If this behaviour continues then you will be sent a letter, and we may have to ask you to take your child home for lunch for a short period of time.

## **BREAKFAST CLUB**

Our Breakfast Club is open every day from 7:45am.

Breakfast Club gives parents, who are in a hurry, a way to make absolutely sure that their children have a healthy and nutritious breakfast at the start of the day.

It also offers parents a form of early morning child care, which will allow them to get off to work.

Every child who comes to Breakfast Club is on time for the start of the school day.

All children arriving before 8.35am, who are left on the school site, will be directed to Breakfast Club as staff cannot supervise them outside at this time. You will then be charged for the club service.

Breakfast club costs £2 per day, and £1 for all siblings. Payment can be made online via the School Money app.



## **TUCK ARRANGEMENTS**

During the morning break, the Junior children (Years 3-6) can buy a snack from the school kitchen. Children don't need to bring any more than 40p to school. They must bring the exact money, as change cannot be given.

### **Tuck Shop Price List**

- |                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| ❖ Toast (2 triangles) | 20p |
| ❖ Jam sandwich        | 20p |

If you would like to send snacks from home, you may, but please do not send any sweets, chocolates, crisps or sugary snacks. At St James we encourage our children to follow healthy eating patterns, and we would like parents to support this.

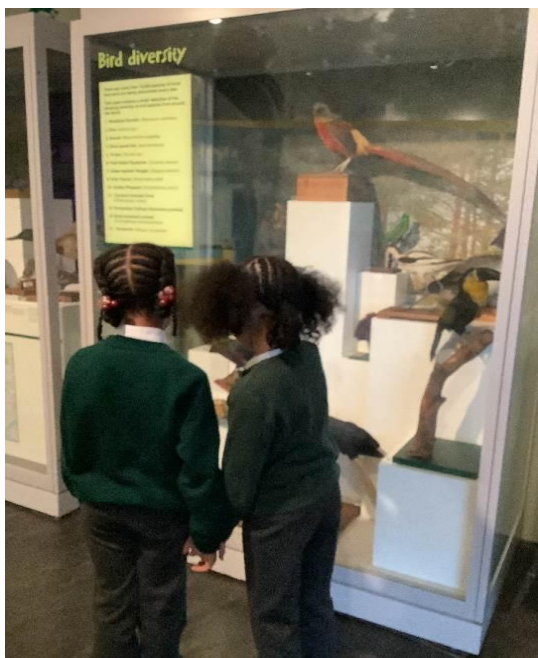
Our infant children are provided with free fruit every day. We have found this very successful within the school and the children benefit greatly from having one of their "5 A Day" in school time.



## Curriculum Trips



We have built up a fabulous calendar of trips and activities for our children. These activities make a massive difference to our children's learning and to their Personal and Social Education. The children love them!



## **Charging & Remissions Policy for Trips(March 2018)**

Since 2014 we have been able to run a fantastic programme of trips without having to ask parents and carers for voluntary contributions towards the cost of the trips to try to ensure that trips are absolutely free. Our curriculum has been designed to have a truly engaging start with a trip, visitor or amazing activity.

### **RESIDENTIAL VISITS & FUN EXPERIENCES**

Residential visits and fun experiences are seen as distinct from educational visits, although they are intended to add to the children's school experience.

It is prohibitive for school to cover the costs of these additional experiences.

- We will charge for board and lodging costs of residential visits. Parents who receive Income Support or Family Credit can apply to the Governors for remission or assistance with payment.
- We will charge for transport & entrance for some "fun" activities e.g. post-SATs treats (Safari Park). Parents who receive Income Support or Family Credit can apply to the Governors for remission or assistance with payment.

### **SUPPORTING FAMILIES WITH MULTIPLE BIRTHS**

We recognise that any family with two or more children wanting to access a residential visit or fun experience will be placed in a financially challenging position

- School will charge for the first child and remove the cost to other children in the same family

Approved by Governing Body on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018

For the full Charging & Remissions Policy, please visit our website.

## **HEALTH AND MEDICINE**

The Reception children will have eye tests and hearing tests, as well as height and weight checks organised by the local Health Authority.

We work closely with the school nurse to ensure all medical needs can be met in school. If your child has a medical condition (e.g. asthma, an allergy, eczema or any intolerances) please tell us. School can administer medication if it has been prescribed by a doctor (e.g. antibiotics) and if it is essential that the child needs it during the school day. School can also administer 'over the counter medicines' such as Paracetamol/Calpol and Piriton. It needs to be brought into school in its original packaging, and handed into the school office. You will need to sign a 'Medication' form to give us permission to administer the medication to your child.

If your child has complex medical needs, we will arrange a meeting with the school nurse for you to explain the details of your child's condition. The school nurse will give us the necessary advice and training to meet your child's needs.

A complete version of St James policy on medication can be collected from school or be viewed on the school website.

## **ST. JAMES ANTI BULLYING POLICY**

Here at St. James we define bullying as:

*“Any behaviour deliberately designed to cause fear, unhappiness or anxiety in others.”*

We work hard to counteract bullying and all the children are reminded of how to deal with bullies. We focus on our key behaviours in collective worship as well as during lessons in class. Friendship, kindness and forgiveness are key to the success of St James and all children are encouraged to develop these characteristics.

We have consulted with our children about bullying and have built their views into our anti bullying policy.

Here at St James our children know that they should not retaliate with physical or verbal abuse but should say “Stop that, I don’t like it”. If the abuse does not stop, they should walk away and tell an adult. Both the bully and the victim are given help to resolve the situation.

At St James we will not ignore cases of bullying. Parents, children and staff are encouraged to report any instances of bullying to the head teacher.

For the full Anti-Bullying Policy, please visit our website.

You can request a full copy of our Anti- Bullying Policy at any time.

## **USEFUL NUMBERS**

St. James C.E. Primary School	0121 523 5861
School Admissions	0121 303 1888
City Of Birmingham School (Behaviour) (Key Centre)	0121 303 0272
Forward Thinking Birmingham	0121 333 8046 0300 033 0099
Education Psychology Service (EPS)	0121 303 1166
Soho Health Centre (Soho Road)	0121 465 4450
Local (Education) Authority (General Enquiries)	0121 303 2590
Looked After Children Education Service (LACES)	0121 303 8003
Police	0845 113 5000
Pupil & School Support Service	0121 303 1793
Social Services	0121 303 1888
Special Education Needs Assessment Service (SENAS)	0121 303 3525 0121 303 4314