



*St Levan Primary School  
where all children SHINE...for life*

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**Parent Handbook 2023**



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## Written by parents for parents

My daughter fell in love with St Levan School as soon as she saw it - banana trees, tree-house, huge lovely garden - all set in one of Cornwall's paradise valleys with a river running down to a cove. It is hard to imagine a more idyllic school.

With the help of Exceptional staff and very supportive parents (and Ex-parents!), children are genuinely encouraged to follow their interests, and develop their talents.

In my Experience, children settle in very easily, and thrive.

Welcome to the start of your journey into St Levan School...a space where magic truly does happen. You will continually be touched by the creativity embodied by the school community, sharing their time and skills to ensure that the pupils are offered an experience of school far broader than any curriculum offers. St Levan above all is about honouring the individual child, empowering them to be strong in their identity, showing up in the school community as who they are and allowing children the freedom to be children.

*St Levan children SHINE...for life!*



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## A parent's view

We moved to St Levan from another local school because one of my children was bullied quite badly. The whole education of my children felt very regimented and there was no scope for a sensitive child who needed a bit of care and kindness.

I had heard of St Levan via friends and it really has been the best thing I could have done, I wonder why it took me so long now!

The staff have been wonderful, they took the time to listen and understand my children and my little boy who had become very anxious and withdrawn at the previous school, now 18 months later is like a different child. The staff are so kind and friendly its like joining a big family. Parents are welcomed in for trips, reading, projects, gardening etc, and they are all so approachable you feel you can discuss everything. They make it possible for children to feel safe and respected which in turn leads to them learning much more than they might elsewhere. I only wish they had a senior branch of the school so we never had to leave !!





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## **Meet the Team**

### **Mark Francis – Head teacher**

Hello everyone (dydh da dhe'n ol) and thank you for showing an interest in our wonderful school. I am delighted to be part of St Levan. Our combined approach of a broad and balanced curriculum, coupled with our focus on individuality ensures we develop, nurture and support every child within our idyllically set school. I have a very community-minded approach to leadership, as I believe a school is at the heart of its community. I understand the importance of family and community and enjoy sharing my own family stories with the children; for example, I have relatives who were Titanic survivors. Outside of school, I like to keep busy with various interests from running on Gwithian Towans and Long Rock beach to landscape painting and gardening.

### **Cassandra Crisp - School Secretary**

I have been school secretary since April 2023. My daughter attends the school and we both really enjoy coming to school each day. We live nearby and as a family enjoy trips to the beach and long walks with Nancy our Bedlington terrier.

### **Jess Ferguson – Choughs Class teacher (Reception & KS1 Year 1 & 2)**

I have been teaching at St Levan since 2015 and feel very lucky to be part of such a creative school. In my spare time, I enjoy learning new skills particularly arts and crafts; it's great fun to bring these ideas back to the classroom with the children. Playing board games and escaping to the beach with the dog are lovely ways to pass the time too!

### **Anya Finch – Puffins Class teacher (KS2 Year 3, 4, 5 & 6)**

I have been teaching Key Stage 2 since 2013 which obviously keeps me busy. Outside of school I can usually be found sailing and racing RS200s, playing woodwind, or enjoying the snow and ski slopes. I also spend a lot of my time with my dog, Pippin, who you'll hear more about later!

### **Angela King – Teaching Assistant for Reception (and Choughs Class)**

The longest serving member of our school community having been a Teaching Assistant at the school for over 25 years! I love working with the Reception years as it fits well with my love for crafts and sewing. I also sing with Pipers Choir and enjoy walking and gardening.

### **Jackie Trembath – Teaching Assistant for Puffins Class**

I came to St Levan from Humphry Davy School. I enjoy gardening and animals and bring my passions to school, spending time in our garden whenever possible.

### **Jan Williams – SEND Teaching Assistant for Choughs Class**

After a number of years working in Education, I feel very lucky to have joined the St Levan school community in September 2019 as a 1:1 teaching assistant. In my spare time I love learning about History and the world around us. To relax I like horse riding, walking my dog Alfie, or visiting local historical sites. I also enjoy cooking, baking and making things!

### **Tasha Beautyman - Kitchen**

I have been working at the school for 4 years. In my spare time I enjoy dancing with the Shindig Cloggers! My daughter is here and I live nearby.



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**Sharon Brolly – Chair of Governors**

Sharon has been on the Governing body for over 20 years and is absolutely committed to the ethos that this school works wholly towards: each child leaving St Levan confident in who they are.

**Other Parent Governors:**

Sophia Milligan - Vice-Chair of Governors

Vickie Hugh-Jones

Emma Pascoe

Sarah Shaw

Paul Yeates

Others you might see round and about:

**John Brolly**

John is either spotted by the crowd of mesmerized children at his feet as he recounts stories from afar or by strolling along, guitar in hand, with a wake of enchanted singing pupils. He teaches drama and music at St Levan and supports the children in creating the forever memorable, always individual, Christmas plays.

**Josh Kanagaraj**

Dancing, tumbling, sparring, drumming, gymnastic genius Josh teaches our weekly Capoeira lessons. A combination of dance, acrobatics, and music, Capoeira is an Afro-Brazilian martial art that the pupils thoroughly enjoy.

**Pippin the Dog**

Pippin is the most beautifully calm, school therapy dog who never ever has a bad hair day! He is a 6 year old cockapoo and belongs to Miss Finch who brings him into school usually weekly on Fridays. He loves playing with balls and swimming and has undergone therapy training and testing to ensure his temperament is fitting for the school environment. Therapy dogs are known to have a calming effect on pupils, reduce stress, improve self-esteem, help children build confidence in reading by reading to the dog, teach children to nurture and respect life as well as a number of other benefits.

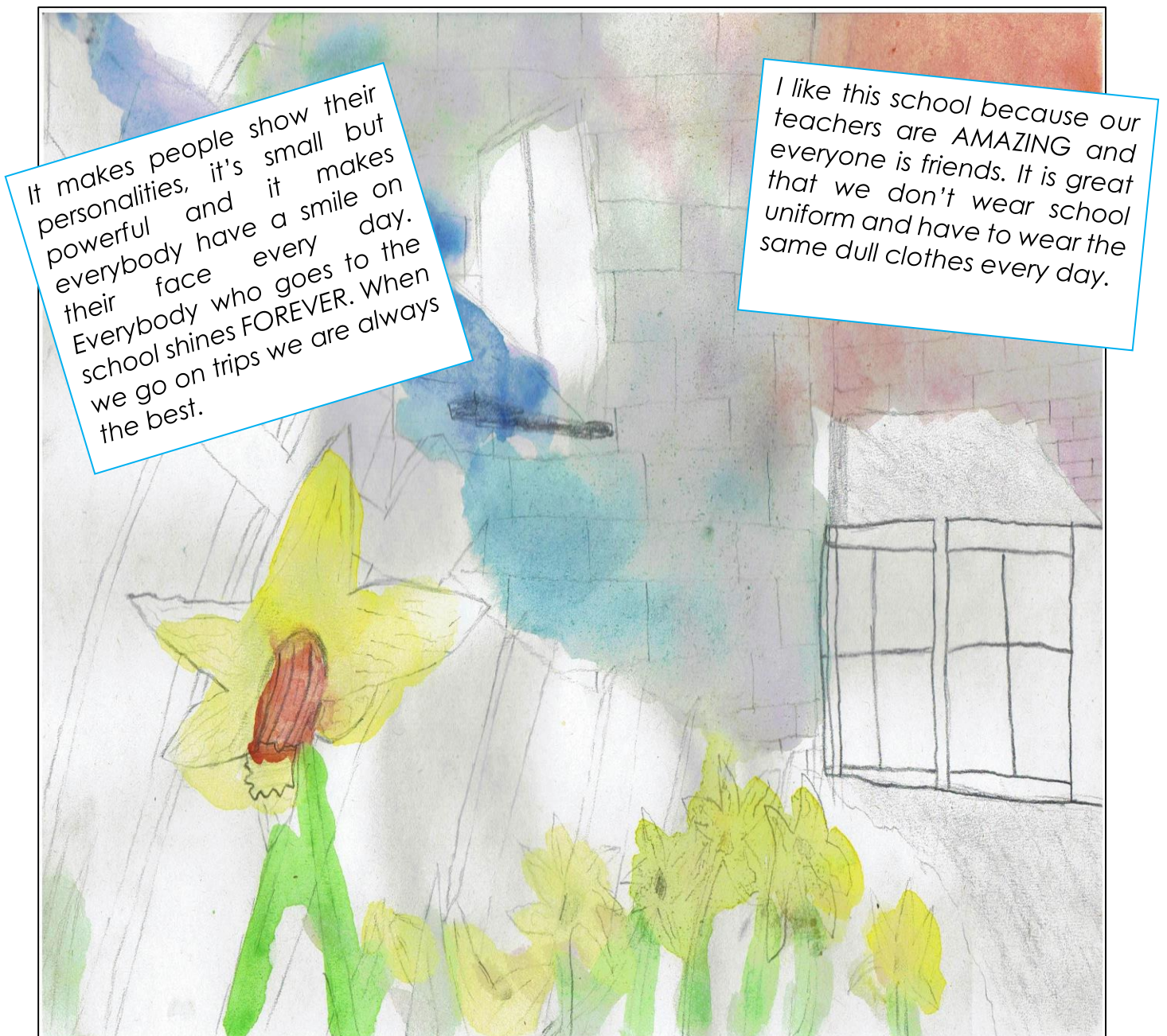




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## Our School

You might well have chosen St Levan because of its size. We currently have 39 pupils: Reception and Years 1 & 2 are in Choughs class (15 pupils) and Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 (24 pupils) are in Puffins class. There are many benefits to a small school with mixed year groups, the least of which is the possibility for each child to work to their academic ability. You might see children of different ages joining other year groups that more suitably reflects their learning.



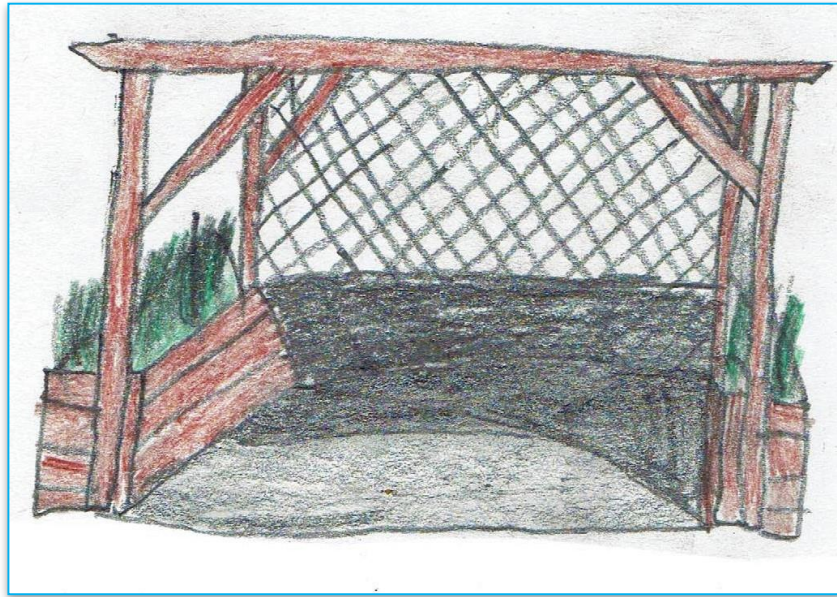




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## **The School Day**

School usually runs from 8.45am until 3.15pm. The playground is supervised from 8.30am and children are encouraged to come in and play with friends before the school day begins.



When dropping and collecting your children please park anywhere on the hill or around the bridge at the bottom being mindful of local houses. We ask that you do not park directly in front of the school driveway or in the minibus space (even if the minibus is not there).

Breakfast Club is available daily from 8.15am. The cost is £1 per session. Please arrive by 8.30am at the latest if your child requires breakfast. This will allow them time to eat breakfast before school starts.

Generally, mornings are a combination of maths, phonics, writing, spelling, swimming and capoeira while the afternoons are topic work, creative arts, drama, singing, storytelling, art and gardening to name but a few. Phew! Trips including to the Minack always feature prominently in our calendar too.

Cooked school lunches are served each day in the Puffins' classroom at 12.15pm. You will be given a menu in the first few weeks of term that will show you the choice of meals to be served each day. The children are asked to make a choice during registration, which would usually consist of a meat/fish option, vegetarian option, tomato pasta or a jacket potato. If your child has any dietary needs, please let the school know as soon as possible.

All Reception and KS1 children (Choughs Class) are entitled to free school meals. For KS2 children (Puffins Class) the cost of lunch is currently £2.50 per day with a 5 for 4 offer if school lunches are bought for each day in the same week. You are welcome to provide a packed lunch if your child would prefer and are asked to keep these as healthy as possible.

School provides a morning snack of fruit and some children bring in their own healthy snacks also to supplement this.





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St Levan tries to offer a variety of optional free school clubs both at lunchtime and after school. You will be given the list of clubs for each half-term for your child to choose from. They run from 3.15-4.15pm. The clubs are a valuable addition to the school and enhance your child's learning and sense of belonging to the school. The Dance Club run by Ruth Caird is a unique opportunity to learn Appalachian Clogging and is embedded in the St Levan culture. Many of our pupils join the Shindig Cloggers who you might well have enjoyed seeing at local festivals and events.





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## Other useful things to know

### Outdoor learning and the Penberth Quillets

St Levan School has a strong ethos of outdoor learning including for core subjects like Maths! There are extensive gardens within the school grounds lovingly maintained by Sophia Milligan and the children, as well as an outdoor classroom, sandpit, greenhouse, fire pit and bespoke climbing frame.



About 1 mile away in Penberth we have two quillets (allotments) that have been nurtured by the children to grow vegetables to supplement the school kitchen. Our time in Penberth is always joyful, helping the National Trust plant trees, playing in the ford, cheering ducks in the duck race or making and cooking pizza in Vickie Hugh-Jones' garden.

We also make use of St Levan sports field for sports days, team games and teddy bears' picnics.



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I love St. Levan because everyone is kind and it feels like we are one big family. It's very unique and I feel like everyone gets a say. It stands out because we don't have uniform and have no bullies. We are a small school which means any problems would be solved straight away and also means we get to know each other really well.

### **Flexi-schooling**

Parents and children at St Levan choose to flexi-school for all sorts of reasons. Flexi-schooling offers the possibility of home schooling your child one day a week whilst attending school for the remaining days. We see this as a very positive way of enhancing a child's individual learning and an opportunity to indulge the child in their passions. If you are interested in flexi-schooling, then seek out one of the Parent Governors or Mr Francis who will be able to tell you more about it. Flexi-schooling is offered at the teacher's discretion for pupils in Reception to Year 4. It generally happens on a Friday to help with the practicalities of running the school.

### **Attendance**

We wholeheartedly believe that good attendance at school supports learning and creates a sense of belonging. As you might be aware the Government requires good attendance (96%) and monitors every school's figures. You will be kept up-to-date regularly with both the school's attendance figures and those of your individual child.

There is a register taken every day at 8.45am and 1.15pm. If your child is ill, please call the school as early as possible that day to inform us and, if there is any sickness or diarrhoea, we kindly ask that you keep your child off school until at least 48hours after the last episode.

If you need to organise an absence with the Headteacher (perhaps for appointments, exams, occasions), then collect a form from the office. Mr Francis will either authorise or not authorise the absence based on Government guidelines. Parents are encouraged wherever possible not to organise holidays in term time.





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### **Home learning**

St Levan focuses on independent learning and our lack of formal 'homework' reflects this, as it is important that, at the end of the day, children are given the opportunity to unwind and engage in their own activities and pursuits. It is, however, crucial to your child's progress that they develop a habit of reading and being read to at home each day and we ask for your support with this. In addition to daily reading, your child's teacher may suggest topic-related activities at the start of each term. These are optional but help to enrich your child's education and make connections between learning at home.

When your child starts school we strongly recommend buying a school book bag. These are useful to keep your child's book and reading log in. Book bags are available from the school office and cost £5.

### **School Uniform**

There isn't any! This remains a pride of St Levan and one that is very much part of the school ethos of celebrating the individual. You will notice over time how each child expresses themselves through their clothing and, even as an outsider, will get a feel for each child.

We ask that children wear appropriate footwear to school, closed toe and shoes that are comfortable to run in. During term time it is also useful to keep a pair of (labelled) wellies at school.

*Please bring your child to this school because:*

- A      Everybody's kind and friendly*
- B      Teachers are always by your side*
- C      Everybody makes friends really easily*

*Year 4 pupil*

### **Secondary Schools**

We are in the extremely fortunate position to have a choice of three secondary schools for our pupils to choose from. Cape Cornwall, Humphry Davy and Mounts Bay Academy are popular choices for our pupils.

All three secondary schools offer the chance to visit when pupils are in Year 5 and 6, with Super Saturdays, open days and evenings, and transition days. They also visit us from time to time for special events e.g. science assemblies or drama workshops.

### **Lafrowda**

St Levan goes all out for Lafrowda! The pupils spend a week in the summer term making their structure for the parade and learning their songs for their annual half-hour on the stage. It is always a fun day where the school comes together to parade through the streets of St Just.

### **The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama**

We are incredibly lucky and unique to be able to devote a complete week to drama. Every summer a group of students base themselves at St Levan and work with the whole school developing further their performance skills.



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### **Friends of St Levan**

Please come and get involved in organising the wide range of activities and events that happen throughout the year; it's a great way of getting to know people and creates a sense of belonging. Dates of meetings will be published in the school bulletin. Our two main annual events each year are the Christmas Fayre and the Summer Fête, which are staples in the community calendar. We also organise a series of talks for families with a supper in the winter months that have always provoked a sense of wonder in the audience. The annual Welcome Supper / Ceilidh at the beginning of the year and Big Breakfast in the Spring Term are always well attended too.

### **Environmental Policy**

Mr Francis and all the staff have been working towards St Levan becoming an Eco School and gaining a Green Flag award, an initiative that you will hear more about. This is taking longer in the current climate. We are also keenly trying to be plastic-free and ask that you are mindful of this when preparing your children's lunches.

## **The Bare Bones...**

### **The Governing Body**

The Governing Body meets half termly and is made up of elected parents, staff and local authority representatives, local community members and the Head teacher, who automatically has a place. The role of the Governing body is to support and work with the Head and whole school community to have strategic overview of all aspects of school life including anything from ethos to finances. Here at St Levan, we work as a team ensuring that our shared vision continues to provide the best possible opportunities for all of our children at all times.

### **Communication**

There is a weekly bulletin that informs you about the following week's activities. This also documents what the pupils have been learning and is full of fun pictures and articles written by the children.

The school calendar can be found on the school website along with other useful information. School also has a Twitter feed where you can watch out for photos and news.

Website: [www.st-levan-primary-school.org.uk](http://www.st-levan-primary-school.org.uk)

Twitter: @StLevanSchool

### **Concerns and worries**

Mr. Francis and the school normally offer an 'open door' policy and both daily and on-going communication is encouraged with the staff. Again, this is one of the huge benefits of a small school where you really do have the opportunity to speak to the teachers regularly. If you do have a concern, then please discuss it with Mr Francis or one of the School Governors who will be able to support you.

*We wish you an enchanting journey with St Levan school,  
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