



EYFS Curriculum Statement

Intent

At St Mary's, we provide an Early Years curriculum that is inclusive of all pupils within its care, as our intent is to create a learning environment that is outstanding and supportive of every child. We understand that this is the first stage in your child's educational journey, and we aim to provide a smooth transition into our school community. We acknowledge that to achieve this we need to work in partnership with local nurseries and parents/carers, by providing information and opportunities to visit the school and meet and talk to the Early Years team. This ensures that for all children, regardless of their learning needs and starting point, we can support their social and emotional development, learning and knowledge whilst utilising the cultural capital every child will bring with them on their first day and throughout their educational journey.

Our intent is to provide high quality education for all children and we do this through tailoring learning for individual cohorts as well as individual children's needs, so progress and development is made in the correct areas at the right time for each child. This is undertaken by understanding where a child's starting point is and working in partnership with parents and the EYs staff to maximise and plan for this through our long-term and medium planning.

We know that every child is unique, and we want them to fulfil their own potential to the best of their abilities across all 7 areas of the Early Years framework (DfE 2021). This will be achieved through an ambitious curriculum allowing children to explore, investigate and discover learning for themselves in an environment that is stimulating and inviting; providing learning tailored to each child's skills and stage of development, as every child learns and develops at their own rate. Learning in a safe and stimulating environment will help to build and foster children's prior knowledge and skills that they bring with them from home, making learning fun and rewarding and allowing them to build up their resilience and independence throughout the year in Reception and beyond.

We recognise the need to plan for and expose the children to an extensive and explicit vocabulary to develop all children's communication and language skills. This is provided for at every opportunity and in all areas of provision including formal and child-led play. We



know that spoken language is a prime area for every child, as it helps them to acquire, expand and sustain knowledge regardless of their starting point into school. EYs staff model how to acquire, express ideas and articulate their thoughts and feelings through modelling, interventions, story-telling and providing tiered vocabulary as well as well-structured sentences.

It is important to us that our curriculum reflects each child and supports them not just academically but also socially, culturally, morally and spiritually through God's teachings. This is also supported through our PSED teachings and safeguarding policy (see school website) and provides the children with social and educational boundaries, rules and limits to allow them to learn how to keep themselves safe both inside and outside of school.

We support children to be active and to develop physically, focusing equal importance on their gross and fine motor skills. Teaching the children clear messages why it is important to eat, drink, exercise and maintain good oral hygiene as well as to be kind to others.

The progress of every child is monitored from when they start school and discussed with senior leaders and school governors three times a year during data collection, where progress and next steps are discussed. The class teacher also meets with parents both formally and informally across the year and will provide a written report in July. At the end of Reception every child is assessed and tracked against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) and the three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning to ascertain each child's skills and abilities.

Our intent is that every child leaving the Early Years will have developed and grown in confidence, resilience, and independence so they can optimise their own self-management and self-regulation to cultivate an inquisitive mind of their own and be able to communicate this ready for Year 1.

Implementation

In Reception we follow the Early Years Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), updated in September 2021 by the DfE. This framework specifies the requirement for learning and development in the Early Years and provides 3 prime and 4 specific areas of learning we cover in our curriculum to provide a holistic learning environment.

The children will learn new skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate understanding through the seven areas of the EYFS curriculum:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

In each of the seven areas above, there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's). These are a statutory expectation which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the reception year. Parents will be informed if their child has met a Good Level of Development (GLD) in a report in July.

The EYFS (2021), is made up of four overriding principles in which our early year's education is based upon:

- Unique Child – Every child is a unique child and is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive Relationships – Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Enabling Environments – Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers.



- Learning and Development – Children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early year's provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Our long-term plan provides a balanced approach to learning through developing skills through play based inquires, mixed in with daily focussed teaching, allowing children to learn everyday skills and knowledge. It is important that EYs staff spend time with the children in provision so they can share learning moments and, through modelling and scaffolding, demonstrate how past knowledge and skills are transferable into new schemas so children make links into developing their next steps. This is built upon throughout the year to ensure children make continued progress so they are ready for Year 1.

Our curriculum is planned so we learn a new topic each half-term to support the learning across all seven areas of the framework. This is a flexible approach so we can adapt topics if the children's interests lead us into varying areas. In Reception, we follow schemes of work already embedded throughout school to ensure progression. In phonics, we use Floppy's Phonics to teach discrete synthetic phonics and this aligns with our Oxford Reading Tree reading scheme. This provides a platform to embed a secure knowledge and assess a child's understanding within oral segmenting, reading and spelling/writing skills which is a whole school objective.

In maths, we follow White Rose Maths which again is used from Reception to Year 6. The implementation of the long-term plan is to provide a knowledge rich curriculum which is broad, balanced and ultimately a fun learning environment that allows the children the autonomy to develop their knowledge, problem solving and enquiry skills so they are starting to become responsive learners and are ready for their next step into Year 1 and beyond.

Across an average week the children will have daily phonics sessions and 4 literacy sessions looking at that week's grapheme / phoneme that also links into a story around our topic. They will also have 4 maths sessions, 2 PE and RE lessons and 1:1 reading time as well as guided reading sessions when children are ready. This is in conjunction with their choice of 'busy learning' times where areas of continued provision are set up and children can explore their own curiosities in both indoor and outdoor provision.

A vital aspect in their development of essential knowledge and skills is the use of continuous provision. This means that children are using and developing taught skills throughout the



year and implementing it in everyday situations. This is the start of children developing key life skills such as independence, self-regulation, innovation, creativity, enquiry, analysis, problem solving, building relationships and resilience. During the school day children will have an opportunity to work independently and collaboratively with their friends and with members of staff.

Through observation and discussion, areas of need and next steps are identified for all children to ensure good progress is made. These are collected in each child's learning journals. At St Mary's we use an online journal called Tapestry. This allows us to share photos, learning and children's achievement with parents at home. We regularly assess where the children are using development milestones and then ensure our planning, adult interaction and learning environment, including continuous provision, support children to reach their next steps.

Children in EYFS learn by playing and exploring whilst being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside. Our outdoor area is used all year round and in most weather conditions. We ensure activities support the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning to guarantee learning takes place.

These are:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things and have a go.
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

At St Mary's, we put a great emphasis on every child's health and self-care and in Reception we think a lot about relationships and friendships, safety and the importance of both physical and mental wellbeing. A part of that is making sure the children feel a part of the school community; every child has their own Year 6 buddy and when they are ready we join the school in assemblies, worships and other social events. We also have regular dates in the diary for parents/carers to come into school for 'stay & plays,' parent workshops, class assemblies and Advent / Easter craft workshops as well as parents' evenings; this is to allow the home/school partnership to continue throughout your child's journey in Reception and St Mary's. We also plan in cultural trips to develop the children's understanding of their local



area and the world around them. We go on visits to the local library, park and farm as well as getting local figures in from the community such as the police and a dentist.

Impact

At St Mary's we strive to ensure that our children's progress throughout the EYFS curriculum is outstanding. We strive for children to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception and to be at least in line with Age Related Expectations (ARE) dependent on their starting point on entry to school, both academically and socially. This allows the children to develop a sense of themselves holistically, in preparation for Year 1.

Our EYs staff have a deep understanding of child development, attend training, external and internal moderation so we can assess individual children. This is also developed through observation, playing and talking to the children in provision with both adult-led and child-initiated activities. We record our observations in varying ways, such as on Tapestry (e-journal) and in their literacy, phonic and RE books to support all areas of the EYFS curriculum ready to complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). This allows us to have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas to develop of every child at St Mary's, to inform parents and the Year 1 teacher in in the summer term to ensure a well-planned transition.

The impact of our curriculum is measured by assessment across all areas of learning both formatively and summatively which allows us to measure outcomes against all schools nationally. This is undertaken by measuring the percentage of pupils achieving ARE (age related expectations) throughout the academic year, and by carrying out individual and whole class interventions where needed.

The teaching staff use observations to make formative assessments which inform future planning and ensure that all children build on their current knowledge and skills at a rapid pace. A child's ARE, are tracked using the guidance from Development Matters (DfE 2021), and then on the Statutory ELG (DfE 2021) this includes vulnerable groups such as those with SEND, PP, EAL, BAME, disadvantaged or summer born children.



Our assessment judgements have been moderated both in school and externally with colleagues in the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust, validating our school judgements.

All the observations, planning and assessment that we undertake is to get to know every child so we can plan for their individual learning and needs; making sure the desired learning impacts each child on an individual and holistic level. We want our children at St Mary's to be inspired, happy and positive learners who are most importantly, confident and resilient children ready to tackle new challenges in all aspects of life.