



St John's Primary School

Early Years Curriculum

Our ambitious curriculum is unique to our setting. We observe our children, studying how they lead their own play. Staff talk to parents and carers to find out their current interests. Our curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced. It builds on what children know and can do, towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for their future learning. The teachers and leaders create an environment that supports the intent of an ambitious and coherently planned and exciting curriculum. Teachers use assessment well to check what children know and can do to inform teaching. This includes planning suitably challenging activities and responding to specific needs. The curriculum intent and implementation is embedded securely and consistently across the setting.

Intent:

In the Early Years at St John's Primary School, we are passionate about children being happy, confident, well-rounded individuals with a love for learning. We believe that the Early Years Foundation Stage is crucial in securing solid foundations that children continue to build upon throughout their school life. It is our aim that the children who enter our EYFS develop physically, verbally, cognitively, and emotionally whilst embedding a positive attitude to school and a love of learning. We do this by ensuring that all children feel safe and happy at school in an engaging and stimulating environment both indoors and outdoors that builds on each individual child's needs and interests. We believe that all children deserve to be valued as individuals and we are passionate about allowing all children to achieve their full, unique potential within a Christian ethos and embedding our Christian values of 'Love, Courage and Respect'

At St John's we fully understand that the children we work with are UNIQUE and come to us with UNIQUE life experiences and cultural capital. We work closely alongside families and in the community to create an irresistible learning experience for our youngest learners to give them the best possible start in their learning journey.

Learning Priorities that we have identified included after reflection and transition:

- Many of the children have had fewer outdoor experiences. Their physical skills are less developed, they haven't played in the park, or used tools in the garden.
- Children have poor communication and language skills.
- Children have had limited exposure to other cultures and lifestyles and opportunities to take part in large scale celebrations.
- Some children have different home language and little experience of stories in English.



- Some children have never eaten a wide variety of healthy foods
- Many cannot balance on a bike independently.

The St John's Primary School Early Years Curriculum is based on the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. The Educational Programmes for each Area of Learning provide the skeleton of the curriculum and will help to shape the activities and experiences for all children in early years. Child development knowledge will enable practitioners to plan and sequence the curriculum to ensure children develop the skills and knowledge they need at each stage of development. Deep knowledge of each unique child, their family/carers and the context of the community will enable practitioners to tailor learning experiences to each child and cohort.

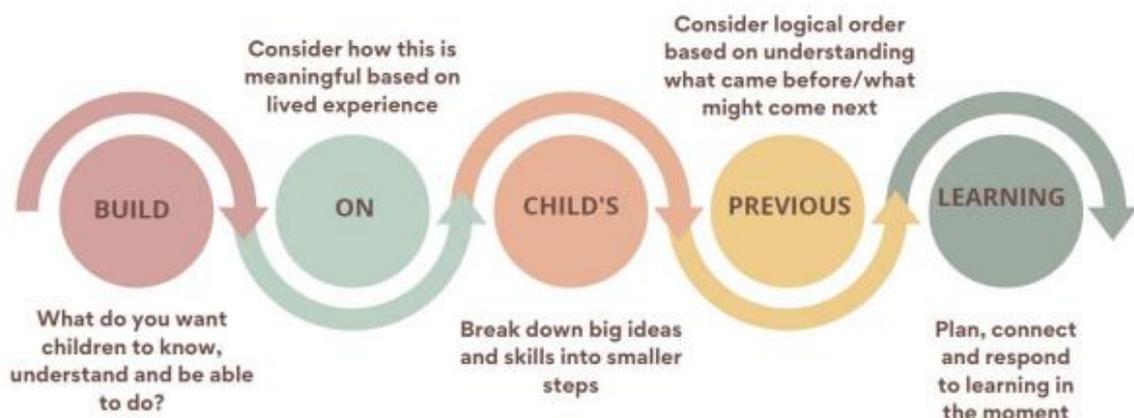
Our Early Years curriculum is delivered through holistic, first hand, engaging and purposeful experiences.

“Understanding that children’s development is **holistic** is one of the principles underpinning the use of development assessments in early years practice. Holistic development means recognising that children’s physical, cognitive, linguistic, emotional and social development are interrelated, inseparable and interdependent. All aspects of young children’s development occur simultaneously, and each area of their development is affected by the others. Children grow and develop through a complex interplay of all aspects of their development. Early years practitioners need to recognise the interrelatedness of development in what they provide: this needs to be reflected in how they interact and how they observe and assess children’s development as they play.” Sally Neum (Child Development For Early Years Students and Practitioners, 2019).

Once we know children well through spending time together and observing, we are in a strong position to make professional judgements about curriculum planning. We will know more about what children already know, understand and can do. We can then offer experiences that are well matched, expand vocabulary and build on existing skills and knowledge.

A Sequenced Curriculum coherent, logical, introduced and revisited

Why this?
Why now?



Implementation:

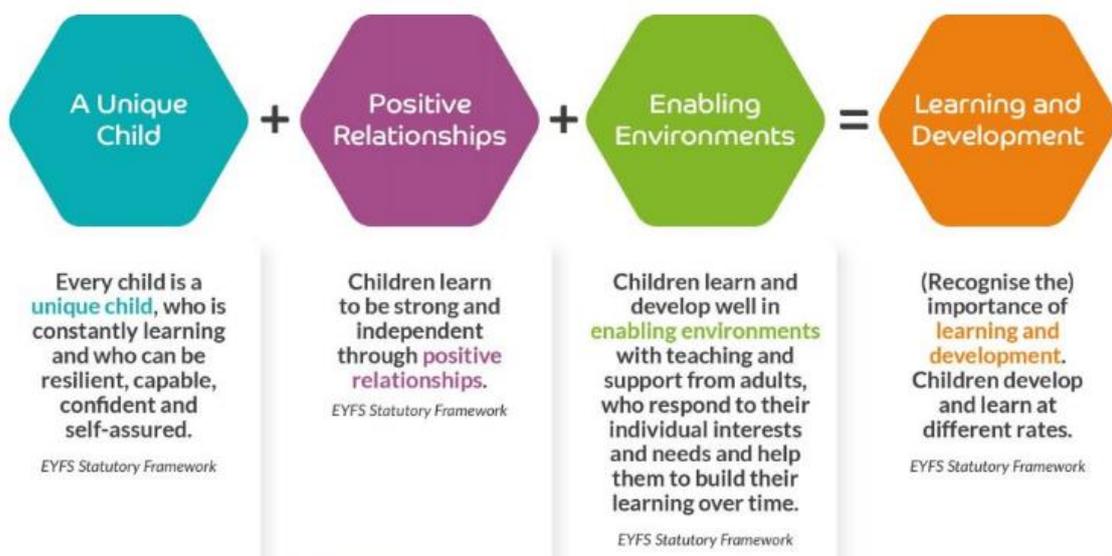
Effective pedagogy is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, and through guided learning and direct teaching. Development Matters, 2021

Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. EYFS Statutory Framework, 2021

Our curriculum provides a structure and a sense of direction. Children learn best when plans are well sequenced in line with knowledge of the cohort and good child development know how. Although children may not acquire skills sequentially, practitioners have a strong understanding of child development to break down and work skills into a bespoke curriculum, as well as to adapt the curriculum in response to what they are noticing day to day. ‘Development Matters’ is non statutory curriculum guidance, with a top level view of typical child development. Some children may have more complex needs, and therefore knowledge of where to find a more detailed view of child development is essential.

At St John’s Primary School, we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. This is made up of **four overriding principles** which our early year’s education is based upon:

- **Unique Child** – Every child is unique child who 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 and 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.





The curriculum provides a play-based and experiential learning environment, combined with focussed teaching and basic skills, to ensure children make rapid progress before moving onto Year 1. The children in Early Years are provided with ample opportunities accessible in our indoor and outdoor provision. They engage in planned, focussed activities as well as self-initiated and free flow activities. The learning experiences within our Early Years are linked to the seven areas of learning and development within the EYFS. These areas are split into three prime areas and four specific areas. The three prime areas are those which the children should develop first and are considered most essential for the healthy development and future learning of our children. These include:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Communication and Language** – involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical Development** – involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

As children grow and make progress in the prime areas, this will help them to naturally develop skills within the four specific areas. These are:

- **Literacy** – the early teaching of literacy involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** – the early teaching of mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and describing shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the World** – this involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – this involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Children benefit from meaningful learning across the curriculum and staff plan resourcefully for opportunities for communication, sustained shared thinking and physical challenge to build on existing skills taking into account the Characteristics of Effective Learning. Each child has a Key worker and key workers have planned timed during the day ad each week with their key worker children to work on targets, remember learning and plan next steps together.

Rich first hand experiences (inside, outdoors, visitors and school trips) to widen experiences, awe and wonderment. Exploratory learning and thinking creatively including problem solving across all areas of learning. New vocabulary and concepts through reading will excite and engage all learners which includes staff modelling standard English and asking high quality questions.

Our curriculum will promote and support children's emotional security and development of their character enabling children to take risks in a safe and secure environment. Supporting children to be active and to develop physically including giving clear messages to children why it is important to eat, drink and exercise as well as to be kind to others.

Impact:

The experiences of the task will be revisited and demonstrated through being deeply engaged in play. Our children will grow to be confident, competent lifelong learners and good citizens. The children at St John's Primary School experience a smooth transition between pre-schools, our Early Years setting and beyond. Effective communication and collaboration ensure the children leave the EYFS with a solid foundation of learning of which to build upon.

We use learning journeys across the EYFS which evidence to the children and their families the successes of the children throughout their time in Early Years.

As a team, we carry out regular internal moderation sessions and also ensure that staff attend external meetings and training to ensure that we feel confident with our judgements and that these judgements are consistent with a range of other settings. Assessment starts with careful observations which are then used to inform planning. Learning and teaching is thus effective when children feel a sense of belonging, curiosity and competence showing resilience and tenacity.

By monitoring assessment procedures regularly, we can effectively demonstrate what learning is taking place and how each child is progressing in all seven areas of the EYFS curriculum. Progress toward the ELGs will ensure a positive disposition to learn.

