

EYFS Statement of Intent

- At St Mary's RC Primary School, we recognise that 'All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.' (The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, DfE: 2024)
- We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children, giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. Our Reception class is a safe, happy and challenging learning environment which enables children to become confident and independent learners.
- We aim for children to benefit from meaningful learning across the curriculum, instilling a love of learning right from the beginning of their education. Our EYFS curriculum is broad and balanced, giving children the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress throughout school and later in life.
- We value the individual child and work alongside parents and carers to meet their individual needs, helping every child to achieve their full potential.

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

The Early Years Foundation Stage covers the education of children from birth to the end of the Reception year. As children move into the Reception year, a greater emphasis is placed on learning skills that will support and prepare children for the learning expectations in year 1.

At St Mary's RC Primary School, we plan a curriculum which is ambitious, well planned and engaging for all children. Our curriculum is flexible which means we plan around the needs and interests of all learners in each unique cohort. Our half-termly topics enable us to teach the breadth and balance of the curriculum whilst ensuring learning is meaningful.

We follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2024) and its four guiding principles to shape practice within Early Years. These principles are that:

1. Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
4. Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates.

Our curriculum covers all 7 areas of learning and development. We recognise that all areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

There are 3 prime areas:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development

There are 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

At the end of the Reception year, practitioners make a holistic, best-fit judgement about each child's development against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and their readiness for Year 1. Overall, there are 17 ELGs which children's level of development is assessed against. The terminology 'working towards the expected level' or 'working at the expected level' is used. This is shared with parents within their end of year report.

What does my child's learning look like in the EYFS?

At St Mary's RC Primary School, we know that '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 and learning that is guided by adults.' (DfE, 2024). We therefore ensure that children take part in a combination of child-initiated, adult-guided and adult-led learning opportunities. During child-initiated learning, practitioners interact with the children, when appropriate, to expand their understanding and to challenge children further in their learning.

-Adult-led learning: this is led by the adult and is planned to meet the specific learning needs of the child. This can be with the whole class, small groups or 1:1.

-Adult-guided learning: this is where adults support a child by guiding them through questioning, prompting or by providing specific resources in an area of the classroom which the child can independently practise or explore.

-Child-initiated learning: this is when the child chooses where to go and what to do in the learning environment. They will interact with resources within continuous provision and those extra added linked to the current topic or interests of the children.

Our learning environment is well-organised, stimulating and accessible for all children. The classroom is arranged into specific areas of provision where children are able to find and locate resources independently. Children have daily access to indoor and outdoor provision where learning opportunities for all areas of learning and development area planned for. We recognise that being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors.

Parent Partnerships

We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning.

We begin to establish effective relationships with parents and carers before your child starts school. You will be invited to an open evening in the Summer Term where you can have a tour of the school, find out important information and have the opportunity to speak to staff, including your child's EYFS teacher.

In the Autumn Term, you will be invited to an EYFS Meet and Greet where you are invited into your child's learning environment where you can find out more information about your child's learning journey at St Mary's, meet the staff and ask any questions you may have.

Each half-term, you will receive an overview for your child's new topic. This helps to make you aware of the knowledge and key skills that your child will be developing each half-term and build upon this at home too.

You will be invited to 2 parent consultation evenings per year where you can discuss your child's progress with their class teacher. Additional appointments can be made throughout the year, when necessary.

The EYFS class teacher and teaching assistants will be available daily, before and after-school, to speak to you.