

Our Lady & St Philomena’s Catholic Primary School

**EYFS Curriculum**

**Everything we do at Our Lady & St Philomena’s centres around our mission statement of**

**‘The Love of Christ Shines Here’**

**At Our Lady & St Philomena’s Catholic Primary School, we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum (EYFS).**

**This is a national curriculum that we are obliged to follow up until our children are entering Year One.  At the end of reception all children are assessed on their attainment of the Early Learning Goals. (ELG).**

The years from pre-birth to five are known as the **Foundation Years**.  The Early Years Foundation Stage (**EYFS**) is the guidance for anyone providing care and education for children in the Foundation Years.  This includes nurseries, pre-schools, childminders and reception classes in schools.

**The EYFS has two parts:**

* **The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**.  This sets out the legal requirements which settings have to follow in order to support children’s’ learning and development, to assess their development and to ensure they are well cared for.
* **Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage.**  This contains guidance materials for practitioners on the characteristics of learning and the areas of learning and development that should be offered to children in the foundation years.

There are **seven areas of learning and developme**nt that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

These are the **prime** areas:

• Communication and language

• Physical development

• Personal, social and emotional development

Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

• Literacy

• Mathematics

• Understanding the world

• Expressive arts and design

**Educational Programmes**

Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, as set out under each of the areas of learning.

* **Communication and language**

The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children’s back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures

* **Physical development**

Physical activity is vital in children’s all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child’s strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

* **Personal, social and emotional development**

Children’s personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

* **Literacy**

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

* **Mathematics**

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, ‘have a go’, talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

* **Understanding the world**

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children’s personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children’s vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

* **Expressive arts and design**

The development of children’s artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

The learning and development requirements also describe three **characteristics of effective teaching and learning**: - This basically tells us how children learn best.

* **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; and
* **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

**EYFS Vision**

**INTENT**

At Our Lady & St Philomena’s Catholic Primary School our curriculum is designed to recognise children’s prior learning from previous settings and their experiences at home, to provide first hand learning experiences, whilst allowing the child to build up resilience, ambition and integrity.  Every child is recognised as a unique individual and we celebrate and welcome differences within our school community.  The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values.  We provide adult focused learning activities and enhanced continuous provision opportunities in order to engage learning and encourage a love of learning and enable children to consider school to be a consistently happy and safe place.

An ambitious, playful approach to learning, based on the needs and interests of our children, is delivered mainly through topic based planning. We teach children individually, in small groups and in whole class situations. Through a combination of teacher input and continuous provision opportunities, learning is planned to encourage children to develop their learning independently through exploration and challenge.

We follow Read Write Inc. as our whole school approach; it aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right as well preparing children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. This is a systematic and effective way of teaching early reading and phonics and ensures all children learn to read words and sentences accurately.

The “Characteristics of Effective Learning” are at the heart of the Early Years Curriculum and explore the different ways in which children learn. They highlight the importance of playing and learning, active learning and thinking critically. All the learning experiences we plan for the children allow them to utilise and develop these skills.

Our learning environments, both inside and outside, are stimulating and exciting, and relevant to the needs and age/stage of our children. Staff create an environment that supports an ambitious, coherently planned curriculum, sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for future learning. The available resources meet the children’s learning needs and promote their focus and opportunities to learn.

We use a positive reinforcement approach to promote positive attitudes to both learning and behaviour. This reflects the values and skills needed to promote thinking skills, and the adaptability needed to succeed in future learning.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

We meet the welfare requirements laid down in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and actively safeguard and promote the welfare of all of our children.

We prioritise creating a ‘language rich’ environment through the use of songs, nursery rhymes, stories and providing time for quality interactions between adults and between peers. Trained staff ensure that interactions are positive and progressive, allowing children to flourish and gather words at pace in order to become confident communicators.

Children are encouraged to become early readers through enjoyment of books and the systematic teaching of phonics (RWI).

The children learn nursery rhymes and develop their mathematical thinking through direct teaching and exploration. We want our children to become confident mathematicians who can apply what they have learnt to real life experiences.

Staff show expertise in teaching systematic, synthetic phonics through regular training, coaching and monitoring of RWI. All children practise their reading from books that match their phonics knowledge and these are used consistently at home and in school. Staff are directed to read to children throughout the day and are encouraged to read and story-tell in a way that excites and engages them, introducing new ideas, concepts and vocabulary through fiction and non-fiction books.

The teaching of mathematics allows all children to experience sufficient practice to gain fluency in using and understanding numbers. Staff are knowledgeable in teaching core mathematical concepts and ensure that practical experiences in all areas of provision support mathematical development provide a strong basis for more complex learning later on.

We endeavour to use our provision to enable our children to strengthen their core muscles through physical play; children spend time outdoors in their natural environment in all weathers. They develop through wonderful, exploratory, sensory experiences in our mud kitchen, giant sandpit.

Our learning environment is adaptable in order to reflect children's interests and progression. High quality learning environments, indoors and outdoors, are organised to allow children to develop new skills, build confidence, access materials and resources independently and make their own choices to move their learning forward. Resources are easily accessible, meet the children’s learning needs, promote focus and engagement and develop opportunities to learn.

The curriculum is taught through topics, which are enriched with classroom enhancements, trips and visitors. Topics are supported by quality key texts. These are chosen carefully to encourage children's speech, language and communication development and children have meaningful learning across the intended curriculum. All planning however, is flexible and responsive to children’s needs so plans can be changed and adapted dependent on children’s interests.

Staff are knowledgeable about the areas of learning they teach and are directed towards the EYFS curriculum, outcomes and pedagogy in order to support the learning needs of the children.

Our learning takes place through different activities including adult led focused activities, child initiated play and independent focused activities. Class Dojo enables us to communicate with parents regularly and celebrate what happens in class.

We recognise that it is essential that children are educated citizens and are aware that children arrive at our school with varied life experiences.  We aim to give all children experiences that they may not have had before both within the setting and on learning visits out of the school. We want our children to experience the world and appreciate what we have around us.  Cultural capital is the essential knowledge that children need to prepare them for their future success. We value and celebrate each child’s own knowledge and experiences that link to their culture and wider family. We build on their individual interests and acknowledge our families as the first and most important educators of their child.

Our lessons and provision are informed by children’s interests that they have demonstrated and also through our observations that are carried out daily by all staff members.  This will feed into our planning when we witness misconceptions and areas that require further support and teaching.  Observational assessments are ongoing, relevant and purposeful, referenced to the Early Years outcomes and leading to improved outcomes for children.

All staff take responsibility for making informed judgements about children’s development, celebrating achievements and planning next steps for learning.

Teaching within the EYS is designed to help children remember long term what they have been taught and to integrate new knowledge into larger concepts.

Quality-first teaching is based on a team planning approach, centred around children’s individual needs and interests. Staff are skilled in the teaching of phonics and reading and generate an enthusiasm for reading and a love of literature whilst effectively teaching new ideas, concepts and vocabulary through daily story sessions and circle time activities.

Pupil progress meetings take place at key points during the year. Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together, but we have a range of additional intervention and support for children who may not be reaching their potential, or are showing a greater depth of understanding and need further challenge. Intervention programmes, include small group and individual support to address the current needs of each cohort / individual and bridge the gaps in learning and development.

Children’s social, emotional and mental health is nurtured and self-care is encouraged. Regular Yoga bears sessions and zones of Regulation.

Healthy choices are encouraged and embedded in our daily routines: snack, physical activities, PE, outdoor activities.

In provision, staff continually promote the development of children’s character and highlight clear messages in relation to why it is important to eat, drink, rest, exercise and be kind to each other

**IMPACT**

**Baseline:**

Prior to children starting, staff spend time speaking to the child’s parents, previous settings and read previous learning journey’s to gain an understanding of the whole child and where they are at. During the first half term in Nursery or Reception, all staff use ongoing assessments, observations and conversations with the child to develop a baseline assessment. This identifies each individual’s starting points in all areas so we can plan experiences to ensure progress.

The RBA (Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment) is carried out within the first six weeks of a child starting Reception. This assessment focuses on ‘Language, Communication and Literacy,’ and ‘Mathematics.’ The purpose of this is to show the progress children make from Reception until the end of KS2.

**Ongoing Observation:**

All ongoing observations are used to inform planning and identify children’s next steps. This formative assessment does not involve prolonged periods of time away from the children and excessive paper work. Practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgements through discussions with other practitioners, photographs and physical examples such as a child’s drawing / mark making. Some observations are uploaded using Tapestry and examples kept in individual files.

**Assessment**

RWI assessments are carried out regularly; allowing us to see progress and also areas that require further attention. The regular assessments ensure children are in the correct ability group for their daily teaching of phonics. In order to ensure that our data is accurate we attend local cluster group moderation meetings, local authority moderation meetings and also have in house moderation each half term.

Assessments are completed three times per year and shared with parents, whereby the Class Teacher updates the progress children have made. This is done through Parents evening meetings and termly progress reports.

In Summer Term 2, the EYFSP is completed where teacher judge whether the child has met each of the 17 ELG’s. They will be assessed as either ‘emerging’ or ‘expected.’ Whilst there is no judgement to state if a child is exceeding beyond an ELG, teachers, have a duty to provide a narrative for both parents and the Year 1 teacher.

We believe that transition is an important part of a child’s journey into the next part of their school career and we do all that we can to make this as seamless as possible. Assessments inform an ongoing dialogue between EYFS practitioners and year 1 teachers about each child’s learning and development help support a successful transition to key stage 1.

The impact of our curriculum will also be measured by how effectively it helps our pupils develop into well rounded individuals who embody our values and carry them alongside knowledge, skills and attitudes to make them lifelong learners and valuable future citizens.