

St Wilfrid's CE Primary School



Parable of the Mustard Seed Mark 4: 30-32

"We will ensure children acquire the skills and knowledge our children need to thrive and flourish."

EYFS Policy

Our Mission Statement is:

Our Christian school exists to provide a welcoming environment in which everybody is cherished and challenged to fulfil their potential.

Our three key values we embrace are:

Belonging, Believing and Becoming

UNICEF Rights:

Article 28: Children have the right to an education

Article 29: Children have the right to become the best they can be

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”
- Department for Children, Schools and Families

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is used to describe children who are currently learning Nursery and Reception classes. We adhere to the statutory framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape the practice within the setting.

The EYFS Principles

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school children may join us in Nursery in one 39 place intake in September. They are also welcome to join one of our two Reception Classes, applying through Manchester’s Local Authority Admissions for a place starting in the September following their fourth birthday.

As outlined in the ‘Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage’:

‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.’

Statutory Framework of EYFS

We adhere to the ‘Statutory Framework of the EYFS’ and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- 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/ carers;
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven curriculum areas, using play as the vehicle for learning;
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Provide opportunities for high quality interactions with highly trained staff.
- We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;

- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment and by the children's own ideas and interests;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, child-initiated and adult supported;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.

The Areas of Learning

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive, both in the EYFS and into Key Stage 1. These three areas are the **prime** areas:

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

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

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

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and incorporate these into their practice.

Characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

1. **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.
3. **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Our EYFS Curriculum

Our curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework:

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

We create medium term plans based carefully on chosen texts which offer experiences in all seven areas of learning. At the beginning of each book, practitioners plan a 'wow' event to enthuse and engage the children creating excitement and intrigue about where the learning will be heading. We share these events on our school learning platform 'Class Dojo' so that parents are involved in their child's experiences and learning in school.

We always remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children's responses. Our planning is continually evaluated by all staff to ensure that children's individual 'Next Steps in Learning' and personalised learning needs are met.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults. During children's play, the adults in class interact when appropriate to stretch and challenge the children further. There are allocated times for whole class daily 'carpet learning sessions'. Children will also engage in whole group and small group activities alongside their independent learning.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice. We create a stimulating learning environment both inside and outside to encourage active engagement in all areas. We ensure that the skills children develop in our outdoor area are different to those they experience inside, in order to ensure we are exposing them to as many different skills and challenges as possible.

Communication and language is at the heart of our curriculum, we ensure that we carefully sequence and plan a plethora of communication and language opportunities beginning with early rhyme and rhythm, progressing to phonological awareness in Reception.

We strongly believe in early intervention and we offer a range of language interventions to ensure that our children can access all curriculum areas. Similarly, we work closely with our SENDCo (special education needs and coordinator) offering a range of additional support to our children and families where deemed necessary.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve the Early Learning Goals.

We work closely with the parents/carers of our high achieving children to ensure that their individual needs are met and their talents fostered. We ensure that these children are challenged appropriately to reach their full potential.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies. Any concerns we initially have we raise with the parents/carers and SENDCOs where we will formulate a plan as a team for how to move forward.

Observations and Assessments

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways and everyone in class is encouraged to contribute.

We ensure our assessment process does not hinder any high-quality interactions with the children. We have now moved away from online learning journeys and we use that time to engage with the children in our language rich environment.

The children's progress is reviewed continually. Throughout their time in EYFS, parents/carers are welcomed in to share their children's learning; both informally through DOJO and more formally during parent/teacher consultations.

At the end of the year the EYFS profile provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements including whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher - who uses the exemplification documents, and their knowledge of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement.

The children are assessed as achieving **On Track** or **Not On Track**.

Children who reach On Track before age related expectations will go into greater depth within these areas, rather than move on. We have worked with Year 1 to create a bridge between the ELGs and Year 1 curriculum as a further extension to learning.

This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements.

Transitions

We understand that a smooth transition from the EYFS framework to the National Curriculum is paramount. Transitions are carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings and KS1 teachers.

We liaise with prior settings children have attended and sometimes visit the child in their setting to find out more about the child and help provide information on how we can make the transition for them as smooth as possible. We also attend home visits for all families new to our school where parents/carers have the opportunity to raise any concerns and ask any questions.

Nursery and Reception staff also visit the local nurseries and preschools to familiarise themselves with the children. Parents/carers are encouraged to take up the offer of a home visit (by the Reception class teacher and TA) or have the option to instead meet with Reception staff in school. This is a valuable time to talk 1:1 with them and answer any concerns/queries they may have.

At the end of the EYFS, our Reception teachers meets with the Year 1 and Year 1/2 teachers to liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs. The children's assessment data and books are sent with them to Year 1 so that their new teachers are able to plan for their 'next steps in learning' from the moment they enter their new class. Children spend a number of sessions towards the end of the school year in the Year 1/Year 1/2 classroom OR with the Year 1/Year 1/2 teacher within the EYFS setting to ensure that they are familiar and comfortable with their new teacher and are 'next year ready'.

We also provide individual transition timetables for those who may have a special education needs or disability to ensure this process is inclusive for all.

The Role of the Parents and Carers

We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators and main caregivers. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

- Holding information evenings before the children start school;
- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during our introductory sessions in school and at our home visits carried out each July;
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions/ send messages via DOJO
- Inviting them to a parent consultation in the Autumn and Summer Terms to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- Valuing parents' contributions to learning journeys;
- Inviting parents into school for our 'Stay and play' mornings
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books;
- Providing curriculum planning overviews for each text, highlighting how they can support their child at home;
- Inviting parents into school for 'parent phonics' sessions to demonstrate how we teach phonics and help them support their child;
- Welcoming parents as volunteers into our school;
- Providing parents with an end of year summary report detailing achievements and their child's EYFS profile;
- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.

Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at St Wilfrid's Primary School. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety.

In EYFS we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, milk, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms, only the class iPads are used to photograph children (for /assessment purposes/wow moments/pictures for DOJO).

St Wilfrid's Primary School has robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role.

ALL EYFS staff hold the Paediatric First aid qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS.

Staff have access to the 'CPOMS' safeguarding system to log any concerns regarding any aspects of safeguarding and behaviour. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns and Sadie Gordon our EYFS Leader is also a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Event of a Closure

Nursery: 2 or 3 pre-recorded teaching sessions of phonics/ maths/ Storytime/ rhyme time provided by members of staff. They will ask for a follow-on activity after each session. Additionally, they will be provided with a home learning grid each week, where staff will provide a list of activities for the different areas of learning which parents/carers can follow to supplement the direct teaching provided.

Teachers will communicate through Portfolio on Class DOJO where parents/carers can add children's photos to their portfolio. Anyone not engaging will be messaged via DOJO/ rung to ensure everyone is safe and supported.

Reception: Each day there will be a daily challenge and 2 stories read by a member of staff and pre-recorded. Children will complete phonics activities and be directed to specific activities on the white rose hub for maths. Additionally, they will be provided with a home learning grid each week, where staff will provide a list of activities for the different areas of learning which parents/carers can follow to supplement the direct teaching provided.

Teachers will communicate through Portfolio on Class DOJO where parents/carers can add children's photos to their portfolio. Anyone not engaging will be messaged via DOJO/ rung to ensure everyone is safe and supported.

Monitoring of the EYFS

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences and outcomes for our children. The EYFS Leader is responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and children's progress. Information is shared with the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, and EYFS team as appropriate and any necessary actions are taken.

All adults in the EYFS team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets.

Appendices:

- Link to the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

- Link to Development Matters:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/971620/Development_Matters.pdf
- Link to Early Years Foundation Stage Profile:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65253bc12548ca000dddf050/EYFSP_2024_handbook.pdf

Member of staff responsible: Sadie Gordon (EYFS Lead)

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