

The Early Years Foundation Stage at St John the Baptist CofE School

At St John the Baptist School we are particularly proud of the family atmosphere and our close links with the village community. We encourage the children to feel that they are part of a team of people who work together for the benefit of all. All children are encouraged to care for each other and for their school. It is part of our mission to educate the whole child. This means that we focus, not only on academic attainment, but also on developing the child's ability to be part of, and contribute to the community. We believe that everyone should be lifelong learners, using skills, thought and perseverance to approach and achieve in a wide variety of contexts and situations.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, a particularly strong emphasis is placed upon the importance of being active and learning through play. This enables children to place knowledge and experiences in context, and to begin to develop and learn key skills which will hopefully stay with them throughout their life. It also enables them to explore different viewpoints and experiences, and to place themselves within the context of the wider world. We aim to provide an Early Years Curriculum that is relevant and challenging in its content, but also good fun, providing your child with the motivation and desire to become a life long learner.



The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is for children from birth to five. The curriculum followed in the reception class builds directly on from that of the pre school settings and is organised into seven distinct areas of learning:

Prime – Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Specific - Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding of the World

Expressive Arts and Design

All of the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. However, it is considered that the three areas called ‘prime areas’ (Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, and Physical Development) are crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The four areas known as ‘specific areas’ (Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World, and Expressive Arts and Design) are considered to be the essential skills and knowledge that a child needs in order to participate successfully in society. The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum recognises the importance of the ‘prime areas’ in shaping a child’s ability to learn.

Each of the seven areas of learning have two or three Early Learning Goals linked to them. It is these Early Learning Goals that the children work towards achieving by the end of the reception year (there are 17 ELG altogether). These set out the skills, understanding, knowledge and attitudes, which it is hoped children will reach or exceed by the time that they leave the reception class. It is important to remember that children will be at different stages of development depending on their age and maturity. Some children will still be working within the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum as they move into Year 1. The Year 1 curriculum allows for this and gives opportunity for reinforcement and consolidation if a child needs it.

There are currently no statutory assessment requirements linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. However, as a school we will be continually assessing and tracking the children’s progress against the Early Learning Goals from the moment they enter the reception class. We will share this information with you at regular intervals throughout the year.

Prime Areas of Learning





Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-confidence and Self-awareness – the children will be confident to try new activities and say why they like some activities more than others. They will be encouraged to develop their confidence so that they are able to share their ideas and speak out when in a familiar group. They will be able to choose the resources that they need for activities and be able to ask for help when needed.

Managing Feelings and Behaviour – the children will be encouraged to talk about their feelings and those of others. They will be given opportunities to talk about how their behaviour can affect others and understand that some behaviour is not acceptable. They will work as part of a group and as the whole class and learn that the rules that are put in place are there for a reason. They will begin to know how to adjust their behaviour when in different situations and take any changes of routines in their stride.

Making Relationships – the children will play co-operatively, share and take turns with others. They will be encouraged to take into account the ideas of others. They will show sensitivity towards another child's needs and feelings and form positive relationships with the adults and children within the school.



Communication and Language

Speaking - the children will be encouraged to speak clearly and express themselves effectively, showing an awareness of the listener's needs. They will have the opportunity to talk about different things with their peers and with the adults in the classroom and will be encouraged to use past, present and future tenses accurately.

Listening and Attention – the children will be encouraged to listen attentively in a range of different situations. They will learn to respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions.

Understanding – the children will follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They will use their experiences to help them answer 'how' and 'why' questions and will respond appropriately to stories and events.

Role play will form an important part of this area of development and the children will be given the opportunity to practice their speaking and listening skills in different ways.



Physical Development

Moving and Handling – the children will be encouraged to show good control and co-ordination of their movements in a range of ways (running, jumping, climbing, etc). They will be taught to think about and negotiate the space around them. They will be taught to handle equipment and tools effectively, eg pencils, scissors, cooking utensils, etc.

Health and Self Care – the children will learn about the importance of good health through eating a healthy diet, taking regular exercise and how to keep themselves safe. They will be encouraged to manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including using the toilet independently and dressing/undressing themselves.

Specific Areas of Learning



Literacy



Reading – the children will be encouraged to develop a love of books and will begin to learn how to read simple words and then sentences for themselves. They will be taught the different phonemes and digraphs (letter sounds) and will learn how to blend these together to help them work out unknown words when reading. They will learn to read some common key words which do not follow a phonic pattern. The children will be encouraged to talk about what they read. A short reading meeting will be held during the first half of the Autumn term to explain to you how we approach reading and how you can best support your child.

Writing - we encourage emergent writing, which means that we want the children to believe that they are writers from the start. All their attempts at writing will be valued, from random ‘scribbled’ marks to recognizable letter shapes and words. We will actively encourage the children to ‘have-a-go’ and write independently rather than giving them things to copy. Alongside this, the children will be shown how to hold their pencil and how to form the lower case letter shapes correctly. Gradually, as they learn more about the writing process so their attempts at independent writing will begin to become more recognizable. They will be encouraged to use the phonemes and digraphs to build words and to write some key words correctly. Gradually their writing will be able to be read by themselves and others.



Mathematics

Numbers – the children will develop an understanding of number through their involvement in practical activities, games, stories, songs and in their play. They will learn to count reliably to 20, both forwards and backwards, and in ones and then twos and tens. They will learn to read and write the numbers to 10 and be able to place these numbers in order. The children will be encouraged to say which number is one more or one less than a given number and be involved in simple practical adding and taking away using one digit numbers. They will be encouraged to apply their knowledge to problem solving activities and to begin to represent their mathematical understanding on paper.

Shape, Space and Measures – the children will be encouraged to use everyday language to talk about size, weight, length, capacity, distance, time and money when comparing quantities and objects. They will apply this knowledge to problem solving situations as well. The children will learn about 2D/3D shapes and be encouraged to use mathematical language to describe and compare their properties. They will look at patterns and try to recreate and describe simple repetitive patterns.



Understanding the World



People and Communities – the children will talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of their family members. They will begin to understand that the children in their class don't always do things in the same way as them and will start to develop empathy and sensitivity towards others. They will begin to recognize some of the similarities and differences that exist between themselves and their friends, and among other families, communities and traditions.

The World – the children will learn about the similarities and differences in relation to other places, objects, materials and living things. They will be encouraged to talk about their immediate environment and how their environment might be different to other ones. They will talk about and make observations of animals and plants

Technology – the children will recognize that a range of technology is used in their home and at school. They will learn to select and use technology for different purposes.