

Christ Church CE, Lark Hill and Lewis Street and Primary schools

EYFS Policy – Summer 2024



Curriculum Intent

What are we trying to achieve for our children in EYFS?

Across our partnership of schools, our Early Years curriculum promotes curiosity and a love and thirst for learning. Our curriculum is ambitious, empowers our children to become independent and resilient and offers memorable experiences rich in wonder. We want to equip our children with not only the minimum statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, but also to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. We recognise the crucial role that early year's education has to play in providing firm foundations upon which the rest of a child's education is successfully based.

It is extremely important that the children feel excited, engaged, and encouraged throughout their learning journey. We recognise that every child is unique, and we embrace this. Our learning is led by the interests of the children and our planning and delivery complements this. We work closely with our parents and carers to build strong relationships encouraging parents and carers to engage with us to provide positive and engaging learning experiences and allowing children to achieve their full, unique potential.

We understand that play is an integral part of learning and this is at the heart of our early year's curriculum. We believe that the correct balance of adult directed and uninterrupted child-initiated play ensures the best outcomes for our children. Warm and nurturing relationships are developed between staff and children, consistent routines and strong relationships with parents are key - enabling them to follow their children's learning journey, at the point that is suitable for their unique needs and stage of development. We work hard to provide a stimulating environment that provides exciting opportunities, promotes challenge, exploration, adventure and a real love of learning.

We want our children to appreciate the wonders and vibrancy of our city of Salford - to learn from other cultures, respect diversity, co-operate with one another and appreciate what they have. We achieve this by providing a strong SMSC, PSED and Nurture curriculum, with British Values, the principles of Nurture and our school values placed at the heart of everything we do.

We enrich our children's time in our school with memorable, unforgettable experiences and provide opportunities which may normally be out of reach; that stimulates their interests and passions and gives them an insight into the city that they live in and beyond. We firmly believe that it is not just about what happens in the classroom, but about the cultural capital and experiences we can offer.

With the progressive challenge the children face as they move into KS1, it is important we support this transition by ensuring our children leave us with solid foundations and ready and excited to take on new challenges. We actively support our children throughout their final term in Reception with transition opportunities to aid their move into KS1.

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Curriculum Implementation

How is the curriculum delivered?

We follow the Early Years Statutory Framework, provided by the Department for Education (DFE). The framework sets out the requirement for learning and development within the EYFS and focuses on prime and specific areas.

These are broken down into seven areas of the EYFS Curriculum –

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

These areas are used in our planning for the children's learning and their activities. Planning is flexible to meet the needs and interests of our children. Ultimately our curriculum is centred on the children. We always encourage active learning and aim to develop the Three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning which are –

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

The early years' curriculum has been carefully designed to be broad and balanced. The learning opportunities and assessment milestones for each year group created, ensure progression and repetition in terms of embedding key learning, knowledge and skills through the prime and specific areas of learning.

As a staff, we have developed year group specific long-term curriculum plans including 'Overarching themes', which support how the different areas, knowledge and skills will be taught across the academic year. They link prior knowledge to new learning to deepen children's understanding.

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The aim of our curriculum is to develop a love and thirst for learning by:

- Providing meaningful learning experiences, developing each child's characteristics of learning.
- Providing high quality interactions with adults that demonstrate and impact on the progress of all children.
- Using high quality questioning and interactions to check understanding and address misconceptions.
- Staff acting as role models to the children they teach in order for children to develop their vocabulary, speaking and listening skills.
- Developing an effective and engaging environment that is set up so that children can access all areas of learning both inside and outside.
- Suggesting home learning opportunities with information about what has been taught, allowing parents to build on their child's school experiences, at home.

The children engage in independent learning opportunities, as well as adult guided group work. We use questioning to encourage the children to query the world around them and through their own exploration they develop their independence, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Throughout their day the children have a mix of opportunities to work collaboratively, independently and with members of staff. We teach discrete inputs of Mathematics, Literacy, PSED and RE with the knowledge and skills from these applied throughout their work in the overarching themes, which is led by Understanding of the World and Expressive Arts and Design. The three prime areas are woven throughout the day. As a school we seek to develop a love of reading and utilise learning opportunities to engage our children with the joy of books and reading. In planning and guiding the children's activities, staff plan for the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. We use the Read Write Inc programme to teach daily phonic sessions. Children have the opportunity to take part in 'Where the Wild things are' – an outdoor therapeutic intervention which support teamwork, language, problem solving and a love of the natural environment. These activities also develop positive relationships/friendships. We believe that by creating our curriculum this way, we improve the potential for our children to retain what they have been taught and to grow as confident, resilient and eager learners.

Children have free-flow access to the outdoor space, where a range of provision supports skills and develops their social interactions. All seven areas of learning are encompassed within the space and allows all children to take risks in an unpredictable environment whilst developing leadership skills and promoting mental health and wellbeing. It also allows Nursery and Reception children to play alongside one another in the outdoor spaces.

We promote children's emotional wellbeing and self-regulation skills through high quality interactions, clear routines and shared expectations. Adults support children to recognise and process how they feel through emotion coaching and provide opportunities for reflection and problem-solving. Every child has a key person which enables adults to build positive relationships with all children and provide a safe and nurturing environment.

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Through our approach to transition into the EYFS, we get to know every child as a unique learner. We offer welcome meetings, stay and play sessions and one to one meetings. Where necessary, our pastoral team will also carry out home visits. Staff liaise with PVI settings and previous schools to ensure a thorough system for information sharing and getting to know each individual child before they start with us. We follow robust safeguarding policies and procedures and our clear protocols and staff training are designed to ensure the welfare and safety of children.

Teachers and pupils have opportunities to share their learning with their parents and carers through Seesaw which is our online learning platform. Photographs of the children's learning are uploaded by school and by parents at home in addition to home learning activities uploaded by school for the children to complete and parents to share children's achievements and celebrations. Parents are also offered an opportunity to attend a 'Learner review' where they can discuss their child's learning and development further with the class teacher.

'Family Learning' sessions and 'Stay and play' sessions organised for parents in Nursery and Reception, allow parents to join in learning activities alongside their children and share the experiences and find out about our pedagogy, teaching and child development.

Curriculum Impact

What difference is the curriculum making?

We work hard to ensure that all of our children's progress across the EYFS curriculum is good, based on their various starting points. Our curriculum and its delivery ensure that all children, from their own starting points, reach their full potential. During their time with us, children make progress towards the national expectation at the end of the Reception Year. Pupils also make good progress toward their age-related expectations socially, developing a sense of themselves before transitioning into Year One.

Our curriculum design ensures that the needs of all children can be met within the environment of high quality first teaching supported by targeted interventions where appropriate. This helps us provide the best possible support for all of our pupils, including the more able. We promote an inclusive environment that embraces diversity and inclusion. Through adaptive teaching we aim to ensure there is equal access to learning opportunities so every child can participate fully, regardless of their background, abilities or additional needs.

We use both formative and summative assessment information. Staff use this information to inform their short-term planning and interventions. This helps us provide the best possible support for all of our pupils and build upon the children's current knowledge. Our summative assessments look at children's attainment in relation to age related expectations, taken from the Development Matters. Assessment information is collected termly and analysed as part of our monitoring cycle. This process provides an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the quality of education across early years and is used to inform further curriculum developments and provision is adapted accordingly. Our assessment is moderated both internally and with other schools, including schools within our Partnership and LA cluster.

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Talking Alongside Children

Part of our early Years pedagogy across the partnership of schools, is to ensure high-quality, oral interactions with all children. We feel this is the bedrock to learning and developing in school. Communication and language underpins everything we do in our early years' practices. Therefore we believe that 'talking alongside children' and using sustained commenting, is the most effective way to develop potential in each and every child.

Staff have regular TALK training and development days, to ensure classroom practice is embedded. Children in Nursery have adult lead WELLCOMM inputs and those in Reception have TALC/Speech and language inputs too. 'Colourful semantics' is also introduced to those who need further language development. All these enhancements ensure each child is catered for, individually, at their own pace/ability.

Staff are then encouraged to 'talk alongside children', observing their play and interactions. Adults attend to what they say and share the attention they show at eye-level. Staff respond, once joint engagement is established, to support and stimulate responses. Both verbal and non-verbal responses are equally valued.

Once talk is mutual, engagement can progress with modelling and scaffolding of language. Pitching language just above that of the child will build on utterances in a more complex way. Sustained shared thinking will then develop with back and forth dialogue. Inclusion and diversity within the partnership is always at the forefront of our pedagogy, so EAL learners and those with additional needs are factored into all our provision. Dual coding is at the centre of this, as a non-verbal scaffold, visible at all times.

Staff still embrace principles of ELKLAN in EYFS, ensuring the acquisition and development of communication is sequential:

Blank Level 1- Naming

What is this?

Show me a

Find another

Pick up a

Blank Level 2 – Describing

Who ?

What is doing?

Where is?

Describe- colour, size, shape, quantity, texture

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Sorting – tell/show me another ..(fruit)
Things together- i.e.; knife/fork
Function- show me something you eat?

Blank Level 3 – Retelling

What did ...say?
How did ...feel?
When did....?
Retell event/part of story
What will happen next?

Blank Level 4- Justifying

Why?
How do you know that ...?
Solve problem

Children develop their characteristics of learning and are able to apply their knowledge to a range of situations making links and explaining their ideas and understanding. Children are confident to take risks and discuss their successes and failures with peers and adults drawing on their experiences to improve or adjust what they are doing.

We believe our high standards are due to our carefully planned environment, enriched play-based curriculum, quality first teaching and the quality of assessments. The assessment milestones for each phase have been carefully mapped out and further broken down for each year group. This means that knowledge and skills are progressive, build on the previous year, and then feed into the National Curriculum for Year 1.

The impact of our curriculum can be measured by the way in which our children are inspired and excited about their learning. Evidence and observations of the children's progress is recorded via our online learning journey - 'Seesaw'. We work to ensure our children develop into confident and positive learners, who are excited by new challenges and not put off by difficulty and set-backs. We teach our children to believe in themselves, belong to our school and wider community and that they can become anything they wish to be - 'high aspirations'. We endeavour to ensure that our children leave the EYFS ready to move with confidence into KS1 and their lifelong learning journey.