



A deliberate balance of skills and knowledge so children can enjoy their learning, develop their learning and aim high.



St Michael's C of E Primary School – Early Years Foundation Stage

At St Michael's the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children in Nursery and Reception. EYFS is based upon four principles;

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

Areas of learning

Our curriculum is founded on the guidance contained in Development Matters 2021. This document supports the statutory EYFS Framework and aids good classroom practice. However, we tailor our curriculum to suit the needs of our pupils. Our EYFS Curriculum is therefore unique to us.

There are seven areas of learning (3 Prime and 4 Specific) which are;

Prime areas

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

Specific areas

LITERACY
MATHEMATICS
UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD
EXPRESSIVE ART AND DESIGN

Intent

At St Michael's CE Primary School we offer a curriculum rich in wonder and memorable experiences for children in both our Nursery and Reception children. We work hard to provide a stimulating environment that provides exciting opportunities, promotes challenge, exploration, adventure and a real love of learning.

It is our intent that all children develop physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally in an environment, which values all cultures, communities and people. We aim for our children to be confident and independent, to believe in themselves and interact positively with others.

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 mix of adult directed and child initiated play ensures the best outcomes for pupils.

Warm and positive relationships between staff and children, consistent routines and strong relationships with parents are key to our approach.

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.

We aim to:

- Provide a curriculum that offers a wide range of opportunities for our children.
- Provide high expectations encouraging them to develop perseverance and self-belief so that they can problem solve and achieve even more than they expect.
- Provide a learning environment that helps children achieve their potential and support those who need additional help in order to maximise their chances of achieving the Early Learning Goals.

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- Provide children with opportunities to develop their sense of wellbeing and ability to regulate their feelings so that they feel confident in our community and are equipped with all the tools they need to transition to Year 1 effectively.
- Develop the skills and expertise of staff working in EYFS through regular and comprehensive professional development either run by the EYFS Lead or attending courses run by other providers.

Implementation

At St Michael's CE Primary School 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.

Children in EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active and thinking critically and creatively and this takes place both indoors and in our outdoor area. Teachers ensure that there are opportunities for all areas of learning across indoors and outdoors. Our environment and all our interactions and routines are intentional.

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. All planning however, is flexible and responsive to children's needs so plans can be changed and adapted dependent on children's interests.

The school uses an accredited phonics scheme, using a wide range of physical and online resources to support this. Every child has access to a phonics session every day with intervention opportunities in phonics and wellcomm for those who find this area of learning more difficult. In Reception, we use the phonics session to also develop children's expertise in handwriting.

We provide effective and focused intervention for those children who are finding learning challenging and are not on track to meet expectations at the end of the year. This is provided in an inclusive way and support from parents is also enlisted at an early stage to ensure that the children have every chance to achieve the Early Learning Goals.

The EYFS team collect evidence of learning activities through the use on a 'big floor book'. Individual children's learning is collected through observations, photos and videos which are shared with parents using the Tapestry online system. This means that parents can engage with children regularly about their learning and can contribute to the knowledge we have of the child in school. Parents are active and are encouraged to use Tapestry to record the milestones children reach at home during the year. Children in Reception also have books where evidence is recorded for Maths and English.

We understand the importance of parental engagement and believe that our parents have a crucial role to play in their children's education. We work hard to create strong partnerships between home and school. Parents receive information leaflets to inform them of what their child is learning each term and to explain how they can support this at home. Parents enjoy using Tapestry to engage in their child's learning and our stay, play & share sessions are consistently well attended.

As part of the learning and teaching process, children are assessed in relation to their progress towards Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals. These judgements are made on the basis of cumulative observations and in depth knowledge of the children acquired through ongoing assessment. These ongoing assessments are used to inform planning and next steps in teaching and learning for all children throughout the year.

By the end of the Reception year we provide opportunities for children to increase their independence in recording their work appropriately to ensure they are well prepared for the move to Year 1. We also ensure that the pedagogy in Year 1 reflects the independent learning skills children have gained in Reception, working together as teams to develop expertise and confidence in all teaching staff. We do this through team meetings where we reflect on practice, evaluate and make decisions about the best way to move forward to enhance children's learning.

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The Early Years team work tirelessly to ensure that children are surrounded by a kind, caring and happy environment which helps them all to develop the same skills in their journey through school. It is a positive place to be where resilience, perseverance and successes are celebrated and every child feels valued and respected.

Impact

The impact of the EYFS curriculum at St Michael's CE Primary School is reflected in having well rounded, happy and confident children transitioning into Year 1. Our children are often amazing role models for others in school. Achievement in Year 1 Phonics is good; 93% in 2019, 96% in 2018. 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 aim to exceed the National and Local Authority data for children achieving Good Level of Development. Almost all our children make more than the expected steps progress from their starting points. Those children who have not, are put on a transition programme and are discussed in pupil progress meetings, so that we can close gaps as swiftly as possible.

We believe our high standards are due to our carefully planned environment, enriched play-based curriculum, quality first teaching and use of assessment.

The judgements of our school are moderated with other schools. This means judgements are secure and consistent with government guidelines and our data is submitted to the Local Authority.

Our curriculum is reviewed annually to ensure relevance and to ensure the voices of our pupils, parents, staff and governors are heard.