

## St. John's EYFS Intent Statement

The Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to 5 years. There are seven areas of learning:

- ★ personal, social and emotional development
- ★ communication and language
- ★ physical development
- ★ literacy
- ★ mathematics
- ★ understanding the world
- ★ expressive arts and design

In the Early Years the curriculum is designed to encourage independent and happy learners. We recognise children's prior learning and various starting points, and create a holistic curriculum that builds strong foundations for the future. We work in partnership with parents, carers and other settings to provide the best possible start, ensuring each individual reaches their full potential from their various starting points. We promote communication and language, physical development and personal social emotional development as the golden threads that are woven into our everyday curriculum. Through our focus observation and effective adult interaction we promote curiosity, independence and enrich our children's vocabulary; promoting exploration, learning and curiosity through play. Every child is recognised as a unique individual and we acknowledge and promote children's interests to provide them with the opportunities to follow their imagination and creativity. We invest time into supporting children's individual needs and next steps for learning. We treat every interaction as an opportunity to create a connection and shape a life. At St. John's our curriculum is based on providing every child with enriching experiences and opportunities to broaden horizons and take learning beyond the classroom. This journey begins for every child in Early Years.

By the end of the Reception year, our intent is to ensure that all children make good progress from their starting points and are equipped with the skills and knowledge to have a smooth transition into Year 1.

### Implementation

Each half term, EYFS staff introduce a new theme to provide inspiration for learning, whilst providing the flexibility for children to follow their own interests and ideas. Children learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities. We promote a love of learning through real – life experiences and opportunities to build on prior learning. The timetable is carefully structured so that children have directed teaching during the day. Teachers often check for understanding and respond to misconceptions quickly and provide real-time verbal feedback which results in a strong impact on the acquisition of new learning. Children are provided with plenty of time to engage in 'exploration' throughout the variety of experiences carefully planned to engage and challenge them in the provision. The timetable changes throughout the year to take into consideration the changing needs of the children. Our provision is reviewed regularly to ensure that it complies with recognised good practice and we do this with the support of local authority Early Years specialists.

### Literacy/ English

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum and our aim is to encourage a love of reading right from the start. In EYFS we have 'Our Favourite books' each half term. The aim is to expose children to a range of books that not only develop a love of reading, but have been chosen specifically to develop their oracy, vocabulary and comprehension. These books will be embedded in our provision through activities, story sessions and on display for children to access independently. Through this, children begin to internalise new vocabulary, language patterns and begin to retell stories. Children will take home picture books and non-fiction each week to share with their families. We invite parents in as 'secret story tellers' to read their favourite stories to the children so children come to learn that reading is valued and seen as important by all the adults in their lives.

There is cohesion and consistency with our approach to align with the whole school Literacy Curriculum

- The inclusion of high-quality texts which are age and stage appropriate
- Modelled reading and re-telling opportunities across each session
- Dedicated phonics sessions, employing harder to read and spell words and high-frequency words

## Phonics

We follow The Essential letters and sounds phonics scheme to ensure consistency across the school. In Nursery children focus on Phase 1 which concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase 2. The emphasis during Phase 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills, prior to being introduced to letter sounds. In Reception, Phase 1 continues but children are introduced to Phase 2, 3 and 4 where they will develop GPC and segmenting and blending skills to decode words. In the summer term children may move onto phase 5 if they are ready. Children are encouraged to read at home and are listened to regularly in school. They are given books that match their phonic knowledge in order for them to apply their learning with the aim of becoming successful, confident and fluent readers.

## 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, asking developmentally appropriate questions 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 texts and rhymes, 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 the adults, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

## 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 will 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.

### Physical development

The development of children's physical skill is essential for their success in many other areas of learning. We provide regular opportunities for children to be active and interactive; and to develop their coordination, control, and movement both on a large and small scale. Children are encouraged to use their muscles to push, pull, build and balance in order to develop the strength in their core and shoulders, so that they can be ready to take on the next step of using tools with increasing accuracy and control.

### Maths

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 five and ten frames for organising counting – children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, 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.

### 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 theatres 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. We believe that 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. Children will be given an insight into new musical worlds as we encourage children to listen attentively to music, discuss changes and patterns as a piece of music develops. Reception children will have weekly music and movement sessions to encourage these skills.

### Our Impact

Children want to come to school every day, and really enjoy their time in the Early Years. They are excited to learn and proud of their achievements. All children make very good progress from their starting points in the Early Years. They are happy and confident about starting Year One and have the skills they need to progress. All children are aware of what makes a good friend and can talk about their own emotions. At the end of Early Years the percentage of children achieving a good level of development within the EYFSP is in-line with or above the national average.

At the end of EYFS our children;

- ★ have good communication skills, both written and verbal
- ★ high levels of engagement and motivation demonstrated which supports them to become lifelong learners
- ★ demonstrate emotional resilience and the ability to persevere when they encounter challenge
- ★ develop a sense of self-awareness and become confident in their own abilities
- ★ are kind, respectful and honest, demonstrate inclusive attitudes
- ★ are confident and capable readers who demonstrate a love of reading