



Early Years Curriculum Statement



Intent

At St Catherine's we aim to provide motivating first-hand experiences whilst encouraging children to build resilience, ambition and a lifelong love of learning. We aim to build on the wealth of knowledge and skills children already have when they arrive by working in partnership with parents, carers and other settings to gather this vital information. We believe this provides the best possible start for each child and ensures they reach their full potential from their various starting points. We are passionate about children fostering a lifelong love of learning both in and outside of school. We therefore provide an engaging curriculum that maximises opportunities for meaningful cross-curricular links and learning experiences, as well as promoting the unique child by offering extended periods of play and sustained thinking. Our curriculum highly values child centred learning that follow the interests and fascinations of the children; allowing them to lead and engross themselves in their learning. Alongside this, we deliver purposeful and carefully sequenced activities which are underpinned by the characteristics of learning; enabling our children to become engaged, curious and motivated learners. Our enabling environments and warm, skilful adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration right from the start. By the end of the Reception year, our intent is to ensure that all children make, at the very least, good progress from their starting points and are equipped with the skills and knowledge to have a smooth transition into Year 1.

Implementation

Our curriculum follows the Early Years Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Through our knowledge of each child and formative assessments the EYFS team plan exciting and engaging activities that will move the children's learning forward. This may involve following a class theme which provides inspiration for learning. Our themes are centred around the children and build on the experiences they have already had. We take advantage of cross curricular links in order to combine transferable skills and develop a wide-ranging vocabulary. This may also include following individual children's interests and making the most of those focused moments where the teaching and learning can be maximised in a one to one way with teacher and child. Adults support and extend learning through questioning, modelling, encouraging, suggesting and providing new resources. These interactions are carefully planned and tailored to individual children to capture their unique interests and challenge them in their learning. 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. Our outdoor area is open all year round and in all but the most challenging weather conditions. Children make their own decisions about where they learn best and teachers ensure that there are opportunities for all areas of learning both inside and outside. Our timetable is carefully structured so that children have directed teaching during the day and long periods of uninterrupted play to embed skills. The timetable changes throughout the year to take into consideration the changing needs of the children. Adult directed sessions are followed by small focused group work. This means adults can systematically check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly and provide real-time verbal feedback which results in a strong impact on the acquisition of new

learning. Each year group creates its own unique blend of whole class, guided, adult directed play and child-initiated play activities dependant on the nature and needs of the class of individuals. We always look forward to what each year will bring.

Impact

The impact of the EYFS curriculum is reflected in having well rounded, happy and confident children who are well prepared for the transition to Year 1. EYFS staff have a good understanding of how ELG's link to the National Curriculum, and through our robust planning and delivery across the spectrum of subjects – both core and foundation - children leave the EYFS stage with the skills, knowledge and confidence needed to continue their journey as scientists, historians, artists, geographers, musicians, authors and mathematicians. Children demonstrate high levels of engagement in activities, developing their speaking and listening skills, enabling them to access more areas of learning and communicate to both adults and children. Children develop skills across all areas of the curriculum including Literacy, Mathematics and Physical Development using these in different ways. Children will have developed a wider sense of the world around them and can draw on these experiences during interactions with others and link this to new learning. We aim to exceed the National and Local Authority data for children achieving Good Level of Development. All our children make at least expected steps of progress from their starting points and for many children, they make rapid progress.