

St Bede's Catholic Primary School



EYFS

Intent, Implementation and Impact

The EYFS framework at St Bede's

The EYFS framework provides us with four guiding principles around which we have planned a curriculum that enables all children to become competent, confident and independent learners. The four principles are at the heart of our EYFS curriculum and they ensure that there is a continuity of practice throughout the phase.

The principles state that every child is a unique child and that they learn through developing **positive relationships**. Children develop well in **enabling environments** and **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**.

The four overarching principles are also used to support continuity of provision as children move into Year One in our school. This approach enables children to continue to develop as confident, independent learners who are not afraid to take risks. As they begin to access the National Curriculum, practitioners continue to recognise that every child is a unique learner, who requires positive relationships and an enabling environment in order to learn well.

The Early Years Foundation Stage in our school begins when children enter Nursey and continues until the end of their Reception year. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is important in its own right as well as underpinning all future learning by supporting and fostering children's personal, social and emotional well-being, and establishing positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning.

Intent

At St Bede's, we create a learning environment which invites a child's curiosity, confidence and individual competency to flourish regardless of backgrounds, circumstances or needs. We work collaboratively with parents and carers to encourage independent, enthusiastic learners who thrive and reach their full potential. It is our intent that children who enter our EYFS begin their lifelong learning journey by developing physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally whilst also embedding a positive attitude to school, a love of learning and an understanding of the world. We provide a curriculum and experiences that allow our Early Years' children to develop a sense of pride in themselves and respect for others in their immediate, school and Darlington community.

Our EYFS curriculum enables our children to be:

- **Unique individuals** whose strengths and interests are valued.
- **Enthusiastic, independent and creative learners** who are curious about the world around them.
- **Secure and confident children** who enjoy coming to school, learning new skills and acquiring new knowledge.
- **Skillful communicators** who connect with others through language and play, ensuring that they play in a vocabulary rich environment.
- **Valuable members of our community** who share our trust virtues of Confidence and Resilience; Honesty and Self-Belief; Respect and Responsibility; Justice and Compassion.

Implementation

St Bede's curriculum includes planning to establish a safe and secure learning environment both indoors and outdoors where children can explore confidently and independently, and where adults can support children to learn by following their own interests and fascinations. The curriculum is delivered by providing opportunities to learn through solitary play, group play, adult supported play, adult directed learning and through discrete teaching. The curriculum provides opportunities for children to build relationships with adults and children. The curriculum is relevant, fun and based on real experiences. Planning includes first hand experiences for the children, putting their learning into context. The curriculum allows and celebrates opportunities for practitioners to observe children learning through play, and to use these observations to plan next steps in their learning through enhancing the learning environment or planning relevant activities. The curriculum is built upon observations of every learner, recognising their different starting points and planning for their next steps. Learning from home is valued and used to help build the curriculum. Any information from home is used to develop a complete understanding about how each child learns, and recognises that children may display different characteristics and interests in the home environment. Following personal interests and individual needs, allows us to plan and provide opportunities throughout our EYFS curriculum to support learning and development and achieve their next steps.

Implementation

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

We support children to develop their characteristics of effective learning throughout our play based curriculum. We believe that characteristics of effective learning play a central role in helping us to understand how each unique child learns best, and are essential to helping us support children to become effective learners. Planning in the Early Years at our school is based upon observations of the children at play. We follow their interests and fascinations and plan from what they have learnt to ensure that we provide engaging and motivating learning opportunities based on real life experiences, and open ended resources to explore imaginatively and to promote creative and critical thinking skills. The characteristics of effective learning run through and underpin all 7 areas of learning and development. They represent processes rather than outcomes.

Playing and exploring – engagement

'Finding out and exploring' is concerned with the child's open-ended hands-on experiences which result from innate curiosity. These experiences provide raw sensory material from which the child builds concepts, tests ideas and finds out.

'Using what they know in their play' describes how children use play to bring together their current understandings, combining, refining and exploring their ideas in imaginative ways. Representing experiences through imaginative play supports the development of narrative thought, the ability to see from other perspectives, and symbolic thinking.

'Being willing to have a go' refers to children, finding an interest, initiating activities, seeking challenges, having a 'can do' attitude, being willing to take a risk in new experiences and developing the view that failures are opportunities to learn.

Active learning – motivation

'Being involved and concentrating' describes the intensity of attention that arises from children engaged in following a line of interest in their activities.

'Keeping on trying' refers to the importance of persistence even in the face of challenge or difficulties. It involves developing an element of purposeful control which supports resilience.

'Enjoying achieving what they set out to do' builds on the intrinsic motivation which supports long-term success. It refers to the reward of meeting one's own goals, rather than relying on the approval of others.

Creating and thinking critically

'Having their own ideas' covers the critical area of creativity - generating new ideas and approaches in all areas of endeavour. Being inventive allows children to find new problems as they seek challenge, and to explore ways of solving these.

'Using what they already know to learn new things' refers to the way children use narrative and scientific modes of thought to develop and link concepts, find meaning in sequence, cause and effect and finding meaning in the intentions of others.

'Choosing ways to do things and finding new ways' involves children in approaching goal-directed activity in organised ways, by making choices and decisions about how to approach tasks. It is about developing their ability to plan and monitor what to do and to confidently change strategies when needed.

Implementing The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is divided into seven areas of learning which are then defined by aspects of learning within these areas. At St Bede's, teaching and learning focuses strongly on the three prime areas for the very youngest children. The balance shifts towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

The Prime Areas of Learning:

- **Communication and Language (Aspects: Listening and Attention, Understanding, Speaking)**

Development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

- **Physical Development (Aspects: Moving and Handling, Health and Self-Care)**

Involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Aspects: Making Relationships, Self, Confidence and Self Awareness, Managing Feelings and Behaviour)**

Involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

The Specific Areas of Learning:

- **Literacy (Aspects: Reading, Writing)**

Development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

- **Mathematics (Aspects: Number, Shape, Space and Measures)**

Involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measure.

- **Understanding the World (Aspects: The World, People and Communities, Technology)**

Involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

- **Expressive Arts and Design (Aspects: Using Media and materials, Being Imaginative)**

Involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Planning for the EYFS at St Bede's

The overview of themes is used as a starting point to create a long term plan which sets out possible learning opportunities that could take place throughout the year while allowing sufficient flexibility for children to develop and build upon their own interests.

Our long term plan gives an overview of the themes and enquiries that are going to be covered over the coming months and notes any special events and occasions that are planned. Our long term plan continues to value experiential learning encouraging further planning based upon visits, visitors and key events that the children may have at school and

with their families. It takes into account the outdoor learning opportunities that children will experience as the seasons change.

Long term planning at our school provides limited details about what will be taught but sets out the foundations for how practitioners can plan broad and balanced learning opportunities based on what they know the children will experience. The broad themes and enquiries set out in the plan are based upon opportunities children may experience in their own lives and communities. It is enhanced over the year in more detail based on observations and in response to children's interests and fascinations. Flexibility within the curriculum over time enables practitioners to plan for learning that offers a variety of opportunity that considers the needs of children who remain in the provision for several years.

Medium term plans are created termly. They are created by using what we know from summative data to inform what experiences and learning opportunities we need to give to the children, discussion about how the children learn in the different cohorts and how we can use what we know about the children's interests to plan for effective learning that has the unique child at its heart. Medium term plans are not rigid but like our long-term plans are flexible so that we are able to respond to the changing needs and interests of individuals. Medium term planning sets out the experiences that children will have and suggests when in the half term these will take place. This enables specific planning and risk assessments to be made. Other agendas that are mapped out include key books and themes based loosely around the long-term plans for the term. This enables staff to consider any resources that may be required in advance.

Medium term plans are used to help develop weekly short-term planning that informs the teaching and learning that will take place on a daily basis. It is used in conjunction with what practitioners learn about the children's characteristics of learning, their interests and next steps in learning that can only be discovered through a play-based routine that allows time to observe them as they demonstrate embedded learning.

Reading

Reading is fundamental to children's literacy development. We teach a systematic synthetic phonics program daily, called 'Sounds Write' to support all children reach the expected outcomes in reading. 'Anima Phonics' is also delivered to Nursery children to support the early reading and phase 1 phonics stage teachings. At the beginning of the Reception year, parents are invited to phonics meetings to support their child in their phonological awareness at home. Formative assessment is used throughout each phonics session as well as summative assessments each half term. This ensures children are developing at an expected level and allows adults to quickly target children that need more support. Handwriting is an integral part of our teaching. When ready, children are sent home with fully decodable reading books that match their phonic knowledge.

We choose high quality texts to support topic themes as well as creating reading areas, ensuring that the full range of genres are on offer to maximise children's interest and promote a love for reading. The children also enjoy the voting system for our daily storytime.

Writing

In their first year of development, we encourage writing for a purpose, as well as discrete teaching through 'Talk4Writing'. Tools for writing are easily accessible throughout the classroom. Through their play, children will often be found making signs and tickets for the puppet show they have rehearsed, or drawing a design and writing a list of materials that are needed to create a 'junk model' or writing menu lists for an outdoor café. We aim for all children to reach the expected levels at the end of EYFS as well as become happy and confident writers.

Maths

We follow the 'Mastering Number' program with supporting materials from NCETM. The emphasis is for children to develop a deep understanding of number, including subitising, understanding quantities, number patterns, odds and evens and recall of number bonds and double facts up to 5 and 10. For areas of shape, space and measure, we follow White Rose. The maths session is taught daily and children are always very active in their maths learning, where the use of songs, visuals and concrete manipulatives are central to the development of their mathematical understanding. Mathematical experiences are continued in the environment, where teaching moments are scaffolded by EYFS practitioners and activities are provided to consolidate and aid children to master new skills taught.

An Inclusive Approach

We have an inclusive approach to learning. Through continuous observation and formative assessment, we are able to act quickly to support children that are not on track for the expected outcomes. Our interventions are tailored to children's individual needs and these are regularly reflected on and data analysed to measure the impact. We work closely with parents, informing them of their child's development and the support that is needed to enable all children to reach the Early Learning Goals.

British Values

British Values are deep rooted in our EYFS curriculum. We promote an environment that enables independence, understanding of our emotions and others, creative thinking, respect and tolerance. In the first few weeks of Reception class, the children are given the responsibility to reflect on our class values and they formulate their own 'class rules' which we share with parents. Their choices are what drives their development during 'learning time'. We foster the importance of democracy where each child feels heard and their opinion matters. A prime example, is our daily story session, whereby children can select between two stories they wish to listen to by using a gem voting system.

The Role of Adults

- Adults at St Bede's support children's learning using a range of strategies, appropriate to age and stage of development. Adults are responsible for setting up a rich and stimulating learning environment that encourages independent play and investigation. Time is given to allow children to explore the environment independently. It is the adults' role to support children's learning through high quality interaction and modelling.
- Adults use a range of teaching strategies that reflect an understanding of learning style diversity, and promote the characteristics of effective learning. Teaching strategies include supporting child-initiated play, leading activities that have been planned from children's interests, and discrete teaching sessions. Adults plan for a balance of these activities depending on the needs and developmental stage each child.

Parents as Partners in Learning

- Building partnerships in learning between home and school is important to us. When children enter our setting, we achieve smooth transitions between home and school by offering a series of visits for both children and their parents. These involve children and their parents coming for stay and play sessions and offering regular meetings between school and parents.
- Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their child's learning.
- Regular Family Learning sessions and workshops encourage parents to get involved.
- Stay and Play sessions make parents familiar with activities and resources.
- Parents are encouraged to share information about their child. This is gathered through informal discussions and Tapestry.

Impact

At St Bede's the impact of the EYFS curriculum is reflected in the development of our happy and confident learners over the year in each of the seven areas of learning. Summative assessments are made three times per year and formative assessments are an integral part of our planning process. Regular moderation with the EYFS team, whole class team and cluster EYFS practitioners ensure we are confident with our overall judgements. Observations via Tapestry are used to support these judgements and parents are informed through parental meetings and when interventions are deemed necessary to support the individual child.

Through implementing the above:

- Children's progress is at least good from their varied starting points .
- Children reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception year.
- Class teachers make formative assessments which inform in the moment or future planning and ensure that all pupils build on their current knowledge and skills at a good pace.
- Judgements are moderated both in school and externally amongst BHCET schools.
- Children are ready to transition from the Early Years curriculum to Year 1.

- Children demonstrate curiosity, independence, resilience and other Characteristics of Effective Learning.