Our Curriculum Intent

Children in our EYFS department at St. Mary's follow a bespoke curriculum based on the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework 2021, the educational programmes within it, the advice and guidance in the Development Matters as well as our whole school community assessment of the barriers our children face, their interests, needs and what they value and enjoy. Using this as a foundation, it has been designed to meet the needs of the children, their parents and the wider community that our school serves.

The curriculum consists of seven areas of learning: Communication & Language, PSED, Physical Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. We teach children by planning and enabling challenging, playful opportunities in the indoor and outdoor environments, across all areas of learning, to develop each individual holistically. This is achieved through carefully planned small steps which ensure learning and development are built upon from the earliest days in nursery to when the children leave the EYFS at the end of their Reception year – where the aim of our curriculum is that the children are ready and prepared for the next phase of their education in Year 1.

We recognise that all children develop and learn at different rates so our St Mary's curriculum is designed flexibly enough to meet the needs of all individuals, including those with special or additional needs or vulnerabilities. It has been designed and built from the foundations of effective pedagogy based on research into child development, which includes a mix of approaches, sound practitioner knowledge of phases in child development and whole school community involvement, to create an overarching curriculum which will be adapted continuously to ensure all needs are met and catered for.

We support each individual's learning by applying practitioner pedagogy and knowledge and through skilful interactions and observations which lead to regular, often immediate, next steps planning and implementation. We also support parents and carers in their child's learning journey and help them to understand the huge positive impact they can have.

The characteristics of effective learning and the research behind them, underpin our curriculum and enhance our pupils' learning. Through an enabling and well-planned environment, we ensure we provide meaningful opportunities for playing and learning, active learning and creating and thinking critically. As children utilise and develop these characteristics they become effective and motivated learners who demonstrate high levels of well-being and involvement.