



St Leo's and Southmead EYFS Curriculum Intent

Children in our Early Years (Nursery and Reception) follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS).

The EYFS Curriculum has seven main areas of learning –

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical development
- Literacy (Reading and Writing)
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

A practical, playful approach to learning, based on the needs and interests of our children, is delivered mainly through topic based planning.

We teach children individually, in small groups, in class areas and in whole cohorts. Through a combination of teacher input and continuous provision opportunities, learning is planned to encourage children to develop their learning independently through exploration and challenge.

The “Characteristics of Effective Learning” are at the heart of the Early Years Curriculum and explore the different ways in which children learn. They highlight the importance of playing and learning, active learning and thinking critically.

All the learning experiences we plan for the children allow them to utilise and develop these skills. Our learning environments, both inside and outside, are stimulating and exciting, and relevant to the needs and age/stage of our children and are fed from the children's interests. Easily accessible resources within the environment develop the children's ability to access the curriculum independently.

Implementation

At St Leo's and Southmead Catholic Nursery and Primary school, we follow the Early Years Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This framework specifies the requirements for learning and development in the Early Years and provides prime and specific areas of learning which we are required to cover in our curriculum.

As we are Catholic school, Religious Education is at the core of our curriculum and this strongly influences our main teaching themes and values. Our curriculum is predominately child-centred and is based upon shared books taken directly from our 'Come and See' Religious Education themes. These themes underpin our Long-Term Plan and allow for us to explore many core values. Alongside this, 'In the moment' learning directly links to the children's own experiences and interests.

In Reception, we also have a series of key storybooks that we focus upon throughout the year following our whole school 'Literacy Tree' scheme.

Within the EYFS, we promote and model active learning to ensure the children are motivated, interested and are eager to learn, and value the importance of observing and getting to know our children in order to confidently recognise their likes and interests in order to support learning further.

Our curriculum is essentially play based, as we believe that play, with its language, physicality and social interactions set the vital foundations for children's educational journey. Play is our fundamental principle and alongside this, we also incorporate direct teaching opportunities across each day to introduce and consolidate skills in phonics, communication, language and literacy, mathematics and personal and emotional development as well as specific learning areas.

All areas of the EYFS curriculum are followed and planned for to ensure there is a broad, balanced and progressive learning environment and curriculum. We strive to provide opportunities which aim to foster children's preferred learning styles and demonstrate the various characteristics of effective learning. We provide our children with the opportunity to be explorers, be actively involved in their learning, and be creative and critical thinkers through the planning of open-ended activities. We aim to foster curiosity through carefully planned learning environments enabling children to demonstrate those key characteristics of effective learning. We strongly appreciate the importance of outdoor learning and view our outdoor learning environment as a fundamental aspect of our Early Years setting.

Here at St Leo's and Southmead, we ensure that our learning environments provide:

Stimulating resources

Rich learning opportunities through play and playful teaching

Support for children to take risks and explore

Through our child centred approach, we plan exciting, enriching activities based around children's interests and real-life experiences. Through this approach our children learn new skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate understanding through the seven areas of the EYFS curriculum.

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

These 7 areas are used to plan children's learning and activities. Planning for this curriculum is designed to be flexible so that a child's unique interests are supported.

During each week, children will work with a teacher to complete at least one adult led English and Maths focused activity. In Reception, this is done by predominantly following the 'Literacy Tree' and 'Power Maths' schemes of work, as well as Read, Write, Inc, and a range of child-initiated activities through both the indoor and outdoor provision, which encompass all the remaining areas of learning. Communication and Language is a high priority within the Early Years as most children enter the Nursery below their age-related expectations. We use the Wellcom screening program (Speech and Language) to ensure children are working at their age and early interventions are implemented within the learning environment and planning is adapted to ensure all children progress.

A vital aspect in the development of essential knowledge and skills is the use of continuous provision, meaning that children are using and developing taught skills on a daily basis independently.

Continuous provision practise and principles begin in EYFS and support children to develop key life skills and use their 'Super Learning Powers' of, Independence, Problem Solving, Resilience, Collaboration, Focus and Originality.

Nurture, Inspire, Succeed

During the school day, children have the opportunity to work independently, work collaboratively with their friends and with members of staff. Our daily focused activities aim to cover different areas of the EYFS curriculum and allow children to develop their next steps in learning.

Through observation, discussion and continuous assessment, ways forward are identified for all children to ensure good progress is made. Alongside focused tasks, there are always a range of stimulating and engaging activities which our children access independently and a variety of opportunities for child-initiated play is continually available.

When planning and guiding children's activities we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practise. Children are continually assessed by our EYFS team through planned and spontaneous observations, photographs, and discussions with the children. These observations are created and collated and assessed against the 'Development Matters' statements and Early Learning Goal objectives. Parents are welcome to contribute at any time to their child's journey through our 'Home Link' books. These, strengthening our existing strong home/school relationships further. This culminates into a teacher judgement assessment of children's attainment against the Early Learning Goals.

Within our Early Years at St Leo's and Southmead the children learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

Our outdoor area is used all year round and in most weather conditions. We ensure activities support the Characteristics of Effective Learning to ensure learning takes place. These are:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and have a go;
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements;
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

We hold high regard for the well-being of all our children. We ensure our children are ready to access learning through the assessment of their level of well-being and involvement. We use the 'Jigsaw' scheme of work which helps provide opportunities for children to develop this, including the notion of belonging, coping, core self and resilience.

At St Leo's and Southmead, we value the importance of transition and its vital role in our children's educational journey. We support the transition into Key Stage 1 for both our children and their parents. We prepare children for Year 1 as part of our Foundation Stage/ Key Stage one transition programme which takes place over the course of the last half of the summer term. This involves a visit to their new classroom, meeting their new teacher, and experiencing school life within a Year 1 classroom. Through close partnerships and detailed and crucial communication between the Reception and Year 1 teams, we ensure the learning environments are similar at the end of EYFS and the start of Year 1 to aid a smooth transition for all.

Impact

At St Leo's and Southmead Catholic Nursery and Primary School, our EYFS curriculum provides a sustained high quality, well planned and progressive curriculum for every child.

As children's starting points and previous experiences underpin the initial delivery of our curriculum through the areas of learning, children are able to make a positive and successful start on their educational journey. We have high expectations and strive to ensure that children's progress across the EYFS is good and children leaving the EYFS at the end of Reception reach the Early Learning Goals and be at least in line with National expectations.

We ensure our staff have a solid understanding and passion of child development to ensure this is tracked clearly using the Progress Journey in Nursery and 'I can Statements' in Reception. These are inputted into the whole school robust system of Sonar, enabling the Assessment Lead to have a consistent approach to assessment throughout the whole school. We ensure all staff play a crucial and collective role in collating, tracking and moderating the progress and attainment of our youngest learners. The positive relationships developed between our EYFS team and children ensure that the children's well-being is high, they are self-confident, have positive self-esteem and resilience.

In addition to this, the children's level of involvement ensures they are intensely engaged in activities which encourage deep level learning and development, which is evident on a daily basis within our energetic and productive learning environment.

The impact of our curriculum is measured by assessment procedures which allow us to measure outcomes against all schools nationally. Staff regularly review pupil progress through pupil progress meetings and moderation meetings (both internally and through cluster schools in the local authority). This ensures all judgements of attainment are discussed, accurate and clear. All children's attainment is tracked and closely monitored. We look at how we can close the gap between pupil premium children, non-pupil premium children, children who are summer born, gender and SEND. Early interventions are put in place to ensure all children progress.

The impact of our curriculum is ultimately measured by how effectively it helps our children develop into well rounded individuals. Our impact is measured by viewing and respecting each child as an individual,

**'Everybody is valued
We are all role models,
Talents are celebrated,
We never give up'**

With our whole school promise of, Nurture, Inspire and Succeed' the children are supported to become lifelong learners. We endeavour for all our children to be Key Stage 1 ready and have our school values embedded by the time they leave Reception, preparing them for their future educational journey at St Leo's and Southmead Catholic, Nursery and Primary School.

Nurture, Inspire, Succeed