

Early Years at St. Andrew's Primary School

Our Curriculum Intent

At St. Andrew's children are at the centre of what we do and we believe that children learn best when they are interested, inquisitive and engaged, which at this age and stage of development, is best achieved through play. Play gives children the opportunity to explore their own interests, enquire, plan and take risks. Additionally, play also allows children to use their creativity, develop their imagination, build on their dexterity and physical skills, not to mention supporting the development of cognitive and emotional strength. Play is important to healthy brain development. It is through play that children engage and interact in the world around them.

Our intentions

- We are committed to providing learning which is engaging, inspiring and most of all enjoyable
- We encourage children to explore, investigate, express themselves and make friends.
- Our creative and stimulating learning environment enables children to achieve their full potential and become confident, competent and independent learners.

Curriculum Implementation

Delivery of the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' curriculum (EYFS) involves a continuous cycle of three parts:

- Observing children - What can they do and what do they know?
- Assessing based on those observations - What is their next step?
- Planning - How I am going to teach them the next step?

We respect children as individuals and understand that they all develop differently. By following 'in the moment planning', a model developed by Anna Ephgrave, rather than adults deciding what children will be learning ahead of time and working with children in small groups, instead we engage with the children at activities they have chosen and teach the children 'in the moment'. Therefore, through play, children have access to all aspects of the Early Years Foundation

Stage curriculum, all of the time, without limits or adult agenda. This means that we can meet the needs of individuals more effectively.

Teachers Role

In this model of 'in the moment planning' the role of the teacher looks a little different. The children will have free-flow access to the provision, which means that the children can choose where their learning takes place. The adult will stand back and **observe** what the children are doing, **assess** what they need to do/know/learn next and **plan** their teaching, which will be delivered there and then. This means that next steps for individual children are not something that are to be delivered at a point in the future, but right there 'in the moment'.

You may notice an adult standing back and watching. This is an important part of our planning as adults need to be clear what the children are doing, to ensure that they can engage appropriately and enhance, not interrupt their play.

We have five focus children each week, which means that these are the children on whom our observations will be focused. This means that each half term every child will have the opportunity to be a focus child. This does not mean that the other children are not learning or getting adult interaction but rather that they are continuing with their own learning journeys independently, whilst we ensure that each child has equal opportunity for quality teaching and learning.

We continue to lead sessions for phonics, maths and literacy.

Documenting Planning

As already mentioned, our planning is 'in the moment' and therefore documented retrospectively. We have a weekly sheet on which we make notes about what the children have been interested in and learning in each area. We use this to reflect on what is going well, what could be further developed or improved and respond to this as soon as possible. Additionally, for the focus each week, we record the observations, interactions and achievements throughout the week which are then placed on Tapestry to show the children's learning journey for that week.

Phonics, Maths and Literacy inputs are recorded on a separate sheet. We plan sessions which are practical, engaging and active, giving the children the skills, they can use when accessing the environment independently.

Environment

Our learning environment consists of three areas, the main classrooms, the messy area and outdoors. Each area is equally important and provides children with a

range of resources and equipment to enable children to learn, working towards both the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' and the 'EYFS' outcomes.

Within the classroom itself, children have access to:

- Maths area
- Writing area
- Reading area
- Home corner
- Construction corner
- Snack Area
- Tinkering station - woodwork area

In our messy area, children can explore:

- Painting area
- Water area
- Malleable area
- Investigation area

Outdoors children can expect to find:

- Music area
- Large construction
- Reading dens
- Sand experiences
- Water experiences
- Mud Kitchen
- Investigation area
- Creative resources
- Growing area
- Climbing frame

Although we have designated areas for reading, writing and maths, there are opportunities for these in all areas of our environment. Most areas have baskets with books in that are relevant to that area, for example, in our creative area you will find books about colour mixing or books with ideas of things to make. We also have writing boxes with handles, filled with resources, that can be transported wherever the children desire.

Curriculum Impact

We believe that children who attend St. Andrew's will benefit greatly from our specialised curriculum experiences. Children will confidently go forward in their school journey because we have supported children to be lifelong learners by providing firm foundations. We believe our children are:

- Independent
- Confident
- Risk takers
- Resilient
- Thinkers
- Doers
- Curious
- Self-motivated
- Observant
- Inquisitive