

**St Simon’s EYFS Statement of Intent**

**Intent***Why do we teach this? Why do we teach it the way we do?*

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the period of education from birth to 5 years.  At St Simon’s Catholic Primary School, our Foundation Stage Unit comprises of a Nursery and a Reception Class.

We work from the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework which sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five years old. All schools and Ofsted registered early years providers must follow the EYFS.

There are **four guiding principles in the EYFS**, we believe it is important that these principles are used when implementing the seven learning and development areas in the EYFS.
The principles are: -

* That every child is unique
* That every child can learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
* That children learn and develop best in enabling environments
* That children develop and learn in different ways

We work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive in school and reach their full potential from their various starting points.

The aims of the EYFS at St Simon’s Catholic Primary School are:

* To understand and follow children’s interests and provide opportunities throughout our EYFS curriculum to support learning, consolidate and deepen knowledge and ensure children meet their next steps.
* To create an indoor and outdoor environment which supports learning.
* To prepare children to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Foundation Stage and ensure children make good progress from their starting points.
* To support transition into KS1.

Our Mission statement ***‘Whatever we do, we do it for the glory of God’*** is at the heart of everything we do.

**Implementation***What do we teach? What does this look like?*

Our curriculum is shaped by our school vision, to STRIVE to be the best we can be for the Glory of God.

*At* St Simon’s *w*e deliver the EYFS curriculum by utilising first hand experience and sharing good practice.

We keep parents informed and we meet regularly with parents and carers to ensure children’s transition into school and through the EYFS is happy and allows them to reach their potential with the support needed.  This includes coffee mornings, parent workshops and drop ins, Class Dojo and parent consultations.

We have a curriculum that is child-centered and that is based upon ‘wow’ experiences and topics which engage the children.  We encourage active learning to ensure the children are motivated and interested.  We take time to get to know children’s interests and their likes to support learning.

All areas of the EYFS curriculum are followed and planned for to ensure there is a broad, balanced and progressive learning environment and curriculum.  The children will learn new skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate understanding through the seven areas in the EYFS curriculum with RE:

* Religious Education

Prime Areas of Learning

* Personal, Social and Emotional Development
* Physical Development
* Communication and Language

 Specific Areas of Learning

* Literacy
* Mathematics
* Understanding the World
* Expressive Arts and Design

These 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 needs and interests are supported.

**Pupils learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities.** The timetable is carefully structured so that children have rigorous directed teaching in RE, English, Maths and Phonics everyday with regular circle time sessions to focus on PSED.

Daily guided activities are set up and planned that cover different areas of the EYFS curriculum and allow children to develop their next steps in learning.  Areas of need and next steps are identified for all children to ensure good progress is made.  There are also a range of stimulating and engaging activities which the children can access independently and a variety of opportunities for child-initiated play.  In planning and guiding children’s activities we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

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.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside and equal importance is given to learning in both areas.  Our outdoor areas are used all year round and in most weather conditions.

Staff in the EYFS make regular observations of the children’s learning to ensure their next steps are met. These are collected in each child’s Learning Journey.  We regularly assess where the children are using the Development Matters Framework and then ensure our planning, adult interaction and learning environment support children to reach their next steps. **Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together** but we have a range of additional intervention and support to enhance and scaffold children who may not be where they should be or moving on children who are doing very well.

Staff support transition into Key Stage 1. They help prepare the Reception children for Year 1 by offering them opportunities to: visit their new classroom, meet their teacher and by beginning to deliver more formal learning experiences in the summer term.

**Impact***What will this look like?*

We strive to ensure that our children’s progress across the EYFS curriculum is good from their varied starting points. We also aim that most children will reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception and to be near or exceeding national expectations.

**Our curriculum needs to meet the needs of all our children**, including our disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, so we spend time looking at and evaluating how children are learning.

We record evidence in children’s Learning Journeys which reflect all areas of the EYFS curriculum.

Class teachers use observations to make formative assessments, these inform future planning and ensure that all children build on their current knowledge and skills at a good pace.

Summative assessment compares children’s attainment to age related expectations using month bands in the Development Matters Framework.  This is tracked to ensure rates of progress are at least good for all children, including vulnerable groups such as those with SEND or who are disadvantaged.

Assessment judgements are moderated both in school and externally with local schools. School’s assessment is moderated through the LA which helps validate school judgements.

By the time children leave the EYFS at St Simon’s Catholic Primary School they will have:

* An understanding of individual and **spiritual** differences between themselves and others.
* Experiences of being **trusted** when initiating their own learning.
* An increased **resilience** to continue trying and overcoming challenges.
* An **inquisitive** nature to explore new things and take risks.
* Opportunities to feel **valued** both individually and as part of a team.
* A sense of **exceptional** achievement and an excitement to learn more.

During their time in our EYFS, most children make rapid progress so that we meet the national expectation for Good Level of Development at the end of the year.  Pupils also make good progress toward their age-related expectations before transitioning into Year 1.  We believe our high standards are due to the enriched play-based exploration alongside the rigor of assessment and teaching the children have as they move through the early years. Offering access to a rich diet of balanced learning experiences is undoubtedly the best way to develop happy, curious children.