



The New EYFS Curriculum

St Oswald's Catholic Primary School



2021



What is the Early Years Curriculum?

The early years curriculum is defined by the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) which sets out the seven areas of learning and what children should be able to do by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (the early learning goals).

It also gives some advice on how to shape what we teach and expose our children to, for example the [Characteristics of Effective Learning](#), learning through play and so on. But how we help children to learn and develop towards those goals is a matter for each and every setting to decide.



Aims of the EYFS Curriculum

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.



Aims of the EYFS Curriculum (cont)

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **quality and consistency** in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- **a secure foundation** through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- **partnership** working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported



Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings.

These are:

- every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).



The Current EYFS Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.



Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. These are the prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development



How was it assessed?

- The level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals (ELGs)
- The ELGs should not be used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development, from being read to frequently to playing with friends.
- Instead, the ELGs should support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for year 1.
- When forming a judgement about whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, teachers should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. This is sufficient evidence to assess a child's individual level of development in relation to each of the ELGs. Multiple sources of written or photographic evidence are not required, and teachers should not record unnecessary evidence.



The seven areas of learning are divided into 17 Early Learning Goals, with each area being divided into subsections.

Area of Learning	Aspect	Early Learning Goals
Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)	Making Relationships	Children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children.
	Self-Confidence and Self-Awareness	Children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help.
	Managing Feelings and Behaviour	Children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.
Communication and Language (C&L)	Listening and Attention	Children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.
	Understanding	Children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.
	Speaking	Children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.
Physical Development (PD)	Moving and Handling	Children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.
	Health and Self-Care	Children know the importance for good health of physical exercise, and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

Literacy	Reading	Children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.
	Writing	Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.
Maths	Number	Children count reliably with numbers from one to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number. Using quantities and objects, they add and subtract two single-digit numbers and count on or back to find the answer. They solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing.
	Shape, Space and Measure	Children use everyday language to talk about size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money to compare quantities and objects and to solve problems. They recognise, create and describe patterns. They explore characteristics of everyday objects and shapes and use mathematical language to describe them.
Understanding the World	People & Communities	Children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.
	The World	Children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes.
	Technology	Children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technology for particular purposes.
Expressive Arts and Design	Exploring & Using Media & Materials	Children sing songs, make music and dance, and experiment with ways of changing them. They safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
	Being Imaginative	Children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes. They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role play and stories.

What has changed?

The DfE consultation in 2019 covered:

- proposed revisions to the educational programmes
- proposed revisions to the Early Learning Goals
- proposed changes to the assessment and moderation process for the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
- and a proposed change to the safeguarding and welfare requirements to promote good oral health.



Child led learning

The primary focus of the new EYFS curriculum is strongly centred around the child as a independent learner.

The new curriculum places greater emphasis on three characteristics of learning: 'playing and exploring – engagement', 'active learning – motivation' and 'creating and thinking critically – thinking'. These characteristics of learning must be applied to all the areas of learning.

While Early Learning Goals may not have changed dramatically, the key goal is to ensure there is sufficient provision to allow children to experience and achieve these goals through independent and facilitated investigation and exploration.



Why has it changed?

The DfE says that the proposals are intended to:

- make all 17 ELGs clearer, more specific and easier for teachers to make accurate judgements
- focus on strengthening language and vocabulary development to particularly support disadvantaged children
- strengthen literacy and numeracy outcomes to ensure all children have a good grasp of these areas of learning in preparation for year 1
- ensure the ELGs are based on the latest evidence in childhood development
- ensure they reflect the strongest predictors of future attainment.



Educational Programmes

Following the consultation, the DfE said that it would make a number of changes to the reformed education programmes including:

- PSED will include additional information on self-care and healthy eating.
- Physical Development will be strengthened to include a greater focus on development from birth to reception and on the link between gross and fine motor skills.
- Literacy will include a stronger emphasis on pre-reception literacy learning, and the link between language comprehension and later reading and writing.
- Mathematics will include a greater detail on the importance of shapes, spatial reasoning and measure as part of early maths learning, and how children can foster a love of maths.
- Understanding the World will include wider experiences for children.
- Expressive Arts and Design will include a wider variety of ways children can develop their creative skills.
- The Communication and language programme will remain as originally proposed.



Early Learning Goal Changes

The proposed changes to the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) are minor, with slight language changes or additional elements being added to key areas:

- Communication and Language will include focus on adult-child interactions, and the word 'accurate' has been removed from the Speaking ELG when referring to tenses.
- Mathematics will include greater clarity to counting and comparing quantities in the Numerical Patterns ELG. Government will proceed with its focus on number and numerical patterns within the mathematics ELGs as the strongest predictor for later maths outcomes. This also reflects government's continued commitment to strengthen the teaching of early numeracy so that all children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are able to start year 1 with a strong and confident foundation in number. Practitioners and teachers will still be required to teach children about shape, space and measures, as part of a well-rounded curriculum, as set out in the revised mathematics educational programme.
- Understanding the World will include a change in relation to the Past and Present ELG to further clarify the expectation of children understanding the concept of 'past'.
- Expressive Arts and Design will include reference to a greater variety of use of tools, materials and techniques that children will need to demonstrate for the Creating with Materials ELG.
- The ELGs for Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Physical Development; and Literacy will remain as proposed.



Removal of Exceeding Judgement

- Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals (see Section 1). Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile.
- The government will proceed with plans to remove the "exceeding" judgement criteria from the EYFSP and says that this will "free up teachers' time".
- Teachers will be expected to continue to identify and stretch more able children



Our Early Years Curriculum Intent

At St Oswald's we want our Reception children to be:

- **Ready to learn:** Children have a positive, confident attitude to learning. They are both physically and emotionally ready to learn.
- **Resourceful:** Children show initiative, ask well thought out questions and are prepared to use a variety of strategies to learn.
- **Reflective:** Children are curious, able and willing to learn from their mistakes and can describe their progress
- **Resilient:** Children are prepared to persevere and stay involved in their learning, even when the process is challenging.
- **Reciprocal:** Children are prepared to help each other and work as a team.



The curriculum in Early Years is designed to provide a broad and balanced education that meets the needs of all pupils. It facilitates them to gain the skills, knowledge and understanding, as they start out on their educational journey, supporting them to progress from their individual starting points and preparing them for the next stage of their education.

Our ethos in Early Years is to support children's personal, social and emotional development so that they feel safe and secure and are ready to learn.

Our key focus' remains the governments prime areas of development;

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

and the core of our EYFS curriculum is built around these areas.



Our broader curriculum is designed around the additional four areas of development.

Through these seven areas of learning we provide topics that excite and engage children in their learning, building on own interests and developing their experiences of the world around them. We recognise that all children come into our setting with varied experiences and all staff ensure that the learning opportunities provided widen their knowledge and understanding of the world, setting ambitious expectations for all children.

The curriculum celebrates diversity and supports the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Those children with particular needs including SEND are supported appropriately allowing them to be successful.



Implementation

Our curriculum is broad and balanced to build upon children's skills and existing knowledge. We take into account the starting points of all children within our care and aim to challenge and stretch all in their learning journey.

We aim to nurture a love and thirst for learning using a variety of different strategies.



- Carefully planning sequences of activities that provide meaningful learning experiences developing each child's characteristics of effective teaching and learning.
- Providing high quality interactions with adults that demonstrate and impact on the progress of all children.
- Using high quality questioning and interactions to check children's understanding and address misconceptions.
- Staff acting as role models to the children they teach in order for children to develop their own speaking and listening skills.



- Careful assessment through observations which are recorded on Tapestry and shared with parents. These are used to inform the next steps of learning and meeting individual needs.
- Developing an effective and engaging environment that is set up so that children can access all areas of learning both inside and outside at any one time.
- Providing activity starting points for child initiated activities that enhance activities linked to the children's learning.
- Allowing children to be successful in their attempts at an activity and using effective feedback to help facilitate next steps in learning.
- Suggesting home learning opportunities with information about what has been taught and activities completed weekly to parents, allowing parents to build on their child's school experiences, at home.



Our EYFS curriculum is child focused and child led, with the interests of learners forming the foundation of our planning.

Topics and themes are carefully selected and planned for to ensure the engagement of all children and to provide coverage throughout the key areas of learning.

We aim to embed the Early Learning Goals into our children's daily practise in class, with plentiful opportunities for number and phonic application throughout the day as well as during directed teaching.



English



Topics are linked to a rich range of core and supplementary texts to enable children to fully explore themes.

English lessons are based from these core texts and designed to give children a clear understanding of story telling, mapping and structure.

We are passionate about nurturing a love of books in our children, therefore core texts are selected based on their rich vocabulary and level of challenge.





Phonics forms a huge element of our EYFS curriculum and has allocated directed time daily.

The Letters and Sounds scheme is used to embed children's understanding and application of their phonic knowledge.

In the early days of their EYFS journey, children are exposed to a new phoneme and reading strategies each day to help them quickly progress to a point where they are able to segment and blend with confidence.

The Oxford Reading Tree Scheme supports our children as they continue to develop their reading and comprehension skills.



Maths



As a school, we follow the White Rose Maths scheme of learning.

In the Early Years this focuses on practical, hands on mathematical experiences allowing children the opportunity to explore and investigate number, shape and measurement.

Lessons are carefully planned using concrete resources and build on prior learning and real life experiences across the theme and year. This starts with mastering numbers 0-5 and then progresses through to 0-10 and 0-20. We want our children to become confident mathematicians who can apply what they have learnt to real life experiences.



Recording Learning

Written work in English and Maths is recorded in dedicated books which are shared with families throughout the year.

We have also recently strengthened the connection between home and school by utilising the online Tapestry Learning Journal app.

This provides a key link between home and school as well as giving a well rounded assessment of children through the use of directed and child led tasks and observations.

TAPESTRY
ONLINE LEARNING JOURNAL



Impact

- Children demonstrate high levels of engagement in activities developing their speaking and listening skills enabling them to access more areas of the learning and communicate to both adults and children. Children develop skills across all areas of the curriculum including literacy, mathematics and physical development using these in different ways.
- Children have developed a wider sense of the world around them and can draw on these experiences during interactions with others and link this to new learning.



Children develop their characteristics of effective teaching and learning and are able to apply their knowledge to a range of situations making links and explaining their ideas and understanding. Children are confident to take risks and discuss their successes and failures with adults drawing on their experiences to improve or adjust what they are doing.

From their own starting points, children will make excellent progress academically and socially, developing a sense of themselves so that they are well prepared for key stage 1.

