



The EYFS Curriculum at St. Veronica's RC Primary School

Mission Statement:

- **Secure** in the love of Jesus, we
- **Try** our best.

- **Valuing** all God's family, we recognise that
- **Each** one of us is special.
- **Respecting** everything God has made, we use
- **Opportunities** to explore and learn.
- **Never** overlooking the needs of others, we
- **Include** everyone, helped by our
- **Caring**, friendly, Catholic community.
- **Always** forgiving, we
- **Share** and celebrate the life of Jesus.

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INTENT

At St. Veronica's RC Primary School, we offer a high-quality environment where children can become independent, learners as they progress through their education. We ensure open communication and links with the community, parents/carers and other professionals to provide children with meaningful experiences and resources. We celebrate diversity and aspire to create a fully inclusive environment where every child feels valued and represented in the school community.

Our curriculum imparts knowledge and experiences children need to become successful, resilient and compassionate people. The curriculum is carefully designed and adapted to meet the needs and interests of all children in the EYFS, while being reflective of their backgrounds. We enhance our curriculum by offering Cultural Capital such as trips, visitors and tactile resources as we find this encourages children's engagement.

When designing our curriculum, we ensure all areas of development are constantly being expanded upon, so children consolidate their learning. We carefully consider the skills children will require to succeed as they progress through school and provide them with experiences and learning that will best prepare them for transition.

Fundamental British Values are promoted throughout everything we do in the EYFS which include Democracy, Individual Liberty, Rule of Law and Mutual Tolerance and Respect.

At St. Veronica's RC Primary School, we follow a topic-based approach, however, this is flexible and is often adapted to meet the interests and needs of the children. Each topic is planned and sequenced to ensure appropriate progression takes

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place. The topics guarantee all children leave Reception with the skills to start the KS1 curriculum. All topics are enhanced in our continuous provision with resources and activities. Topics are typically introduced through good quality stories or non-fiction texts as this teaches children that reading is a basis for all learning regardless of the subject. In turn, using books also extends children's vocabulary and develops their language skills which is a priority in our planning.

We place a high importance on building positive relationships with children in order to promote emotional well-being. Working in partnership with families is vital to our practice as we recognise that parents/carers are their child's first and foremost educators.

We apply a range of teaching methods in the EYFS including child-initiated learning, whole class teaching, group activities, adult-led learning and interventions. As many activities as possible are play-based, however, there is a need for teacher-led learning to ensure children obtain essential skills and knowledge in areas such as reading, writing and mathematics. All activities are modelled and scaffolded upon to allow children the time, support and resources to practise, repeat and develop.

In Reception, we are constantly reviewing our curriculum and continue to adapt. Assessment is ongoing, allowing us to pinpoint how our children are progressing towards the Early Learning Goals and guides us on our planning, routines and resources.

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IMPLEMENTATION

The seven key features of effective practice outlined in **Development Matters (2021)** underpins everything we do in Reception:

- The best for every child
- High-quality care
- Curriculum: what we want children to learn
- Pedagogy: helping children to learn
- Assessment: checking what children have learnt
- Self-regulation and executive functioning
- Partnership with parents

Our curriculum is based on the seven areas of development outlined in the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)**.

There are three prime areas of learning:

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

And four specific areas of learning:

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

We also encourage children to meet their needs through the characteristics of effective learning:

- **Playing and Exploring**
- **Active Learning**
- **Creative and Critical Thinking**

At St. Veronica's, we understand that children learn best when they are engaged, motivated and active in their learning. We believe Early Years education should be as practical as possible. Therefore, our learning is, for the majority, play-based. Children, through play, gain confidence as explorers, relate and build relationships with one another as well as setting their own goals and expectations. We strongly believe everything is a learning opportunity in Reception Class.

Communication and Language

Children are encouraged to listen and respond appropriately to peers and adults through whole class teaching, adult-led experiences, one on one experiences and child-initiated play. In our outdoor provision, we have a shed dedicated to the development of communication and language skills with a variety of resources to encourage talk amongst children. Children are read to daily and are exposed to a variety of genres and forms such as fiction, non-fiction and poetry. This

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encourages children to learn new vocabulary often linked to the topic which is then displayed on the classroom's vocabulary tree. Each topic contains enhancements to the indoor and outdoor learning environments to encourage communication and language such as role play opportunities and small world so they can utilise the new vocabulary in conversation and investigate new concepts through play with their peers. We also learn lines and perform a Nativity which extends the children's vocabulary and encourages them to become more confident in their spoken language skills. Children are encouraged to ask questions, investigate and contribute to conversations and class discussions whether that be asking questions to Father Christmas or investigating smelly pots. Children who may struggle to communicate with others are part of our 'Ginger Bear Gang' (Time for Talk) intervention in which we encourage children to become confident, discuss their thoughts openly and ensure a good use of English from the offset.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

An absolute priority in our Reception Class is that children feel safe and secure. We do this by building a supportive environment and warm relationships with the adults and peers. Children are encouraged and taught to manage their selves particularly in areas such as oral health, hygiene and healthy choices in whole class teaching, visitors as well as classroom routines. We also teach children about fire safety, stranger danger, road safety etc. as these are fundamental in keeping their selves safe. We act as role models to the children by modelling self-regulatory skills so children can lead by example. In order for children to be confident, we celebrate their achievements as a group and learn to respond to others appropriately. Children are constantly learning to regulate their emotions through play and their interactions with

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peers however children are also shown how to respond appropriately when they are upset in order to become happy, confident and resilient learners.

Physical Development

We understand the importance of children being physically active during their play in order to develop their physiological, cardiovascular and motor skills. On Mondays, we provide children with opportunities to play using balls, bats and hoops in order to develop their control, coordination and use of space. On Friday's, we provide bikes and scooters for children to access and an opportunity in the year to attend Bikeability. We recognise the benefit of physical activity therefore we expose children to a comprehensive PE curriculum which allows children to develop their fundamental movement skills. There are building materials in the outdoor provision such as planks, bricks, tyres and crates for children to access and build with cooperatively. We also have a maths shed and communication and language shed which offers opportunities for children to develop their gross and fine motor skills through resources such as chalk, weight scales, giant dominoes etc. We believe children should learn to take measured risks and feel confident enough to 'have a go'.

Fine motor opportunities are consistent throughout our learning environment as most areas are enhanced with clipboards and mark-making materials. We provide a fine motor area in our provision which has materials such as links, threading, pompoms, tweezers etc. Children are also encouraged to do their own buttons and zips to develop essential control. Throughout adult-led experiences and child-initiated learning, there are opportunities to enhance children's fine motor ability so they can write accurately and draw with precision, making their markings more meaningful.

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Literacy: Reading

We believe we, as educators, have a duty to develop children's love of books and reading as soon as they arrive at St. Veronica's RC Primary School. We ensure this by providing a range of high quality texts in our continuous provision as well as a driving force behind our topics which overall enhances the whole curriculum. We teach the Red Rose: Letters and Sounds Phonics Programme at St. Veronica's, in daily twenty-five minute sessions. In addition to daily phonics, children take part in one on one reading and guided reading activities weekly. They are given two books per week to take home which are appropriate to the level of phonics they are working at. Children are also encouraged to take home age-appropriate picture books from our school library which is filled with high-quality texts. We read stories to the children at every available opportunity. These books are also used to enhance all areas of the learning environment. Children who need additional support with phonics are targeted for intervention and one on one support to develop their skills. We also ensure children consolidate their learning in phonics through the provision, often allowing children to build their CVC words.

Literacy: Writing

We introduce physical skills to support writing straight away with a variety of resources and opportunities within our environment e.g. notepads in the home corner, chalk in the outdoor provision etc. As well as teaching skills to support writing, we provide our children with a range of pencils, pens and other media to encourage them to write as much as possible. As the children's writing develops, we encourage them to write 'for a purpose' with modelling, adult-led experiences and enhancements to the learning environment. We teach letter formation in line with our 'Red Rose: Letters

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and Sounds' Phonics Programme and then our teaching scaffolds the children to become independent in their writing and apply their knowledge to their play. Children who need extra support in their writing will be targeted for intervention as soon as possible.

Mathematics

Children are taught mathematics through a daily twenty-five-minute Maths session, in line with the White Rose Maths Scheme which takes on a mastery approach to teaching. Following these sessions, children engage with an adult-led activity to consolidate the learning from the day's session. This is then placed in continuous provision to further enhance children's learning with next steps in mind. We also have a maths area in the indoor provision and a maths shed in the outdoor provision children can access during their play.

Understanding the World

We strive to give children knowledge about the world around them through our topic-based approach with an emphasis on cultural capital. To encourage children's motivation and their desire to learn, we build and expand on real-life experiences as much as possible, for example, going on a local walk, a visit from a dentist etc. We also teach scientific content through various observations and investigations such as classifying animals and changes of state like making porridge. Geography is taught predominantly in our 'Wish You Were Here' topic in which we look at simple maps, discuss the country we live in, holidaying to Spain and the differences between where we live and the Polar Regions. Similarly, we introduce our children to History by learning about our families and how they may differ from others,

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investigate historical figures such as Teddy Roosevelt when we look at the history of toys and how the local area has changed. Children also learn about different cultures throughout the year based on celebrations such as Diwali, Chinese New Year, Hanukkah and Eid. As well as this our RE Programme 'Come and See' deepens the children's knowledge of Catholicism and the PSHE Programme 'SCARF' allows them to learn about differences and understand their selves better.

Expressive Arts and Design

At St. Veronica's, we encourage creativity and imagination in all areas of learning. We have enhancements in continuous provision which encourage children to sing songs, make music and perform. Children are given opportunities to role play in the home corner and outdoor provision and make up their own stories. We have a music lesson each week taught to extend their knowledge of songs and nursery rhymes as well as technological vocabulary such as beat and pulse. We also hold a Reception Class Nativity each year in which children must learn songs, lines and perform for an audience. In art, the children are taught how to safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. We offer a variety of adult-led experiences to enhance the children's skills such as making portraits, shape pictures, observational drawings etc. We also explore the work of Henri Matisse and his famous artwork 'The Snail'. Child-initiated arts and crafts is encouraged in continuous provision with our easel area and creative station with options such as painting and junk modelling available. We ensure children leave Reception with good art skills and the imagination to use their own ideas and techniques.

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Inclusion

We work collaboratively with parents/carers, the school's Special Educational Needs & Disability Coordinator (SENDCo) to provide provision for children who may experience barriers to their learning and require additional support due to sensory or physical impairments, learning difficulties or emotional or social development in line with the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice (2014) and the school's SEND/Inclusion Policy.

We meet the needs of all our children by:

- **Setting realistic and challenging goals. We aim for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS. We achieve this by planning for different learning styles, children with SEND, children who are more able, children with disabilities or medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds and children with English as an Additional Language (EAL).**
- **Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contributions of all children are celebrated and valued.**
- **Using resources, which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping which all children have access to.**
- **Monitoring children's progress and providing additional support where necessary.**
- **Working collaboratively with families and other professionals.**

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Assessment

When children first arrive in our Reception Class, teachers complete a 'Reception Baseline Assessment' (RBA). This must be carried out within the first six weeks of pupils starting school and assesses pupils' ability in communication, language, literacy and mathematics. This is used to support the class teacher's own baseline assessment and to target children's needs through intervention.

Formative assessment in the Foundation Stage are continuous and take the form of observations, examples of child-initiated work and samples of dated work (Phonics and Morning Starters) also work from Mathematics and English books and photographs in our learning journey. The teachers and teaching assistant keep observational records and use these to record examples of each child's work, capturing the 'wow' moments. We use this information to ensure future planning reflects individual and group needs. Once a term, summative assessments are completed to monitor children's learning to ensure they are on track and support children as required.

As children reach the end of their Early Years journey (end of Reception), they are assessed against the Early Learning Goals. If they achieve the Early Learning Goal (ELG) in all Prime Areas, as well as Literacy and Mathematics, they are assessed as achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) overall.

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Working with Parents/Carers and other significant adults

We recognise the importance of working alongside parents/carers and other significant adults throughout a child's education. We do this by:

- **Listening regularly to parents and giving them clear information about their child's progress.**
- **Inviting all parents to a 'Meet the Teacher' meeting during the first term.**
- **Holding 'Stay and Play' sessions so parents and children have an opportunity to get to know their teachers and the classroom before starting.**
- **Providing Parent's evenings during the school year to discuss their child's progress.**
- **Encouraging parents to discuss any concerns with the Reception staff in person or in their communication book.**
- **Encouraging parents to send in children's star moments to share with the class.**
- **Holding workshops for phonics and maths to help with homework.**
- **Working to build good relationships with families and other professionals to promote a regular two-way flow of information.**
- **Providing home learning activities each half term.**

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IMPACT

- The majority of children in Reception reach a Good Level of Development (GLD) by the end of the summer term.
- Children develop the characteristics of effective learning which helps them on their journey through the rest of school.
- Children enjoy being independent and managing their selves and their learning.
- Practise is improved year on year.
- Children have high levels of well-being.
- Children and parents all feel part of the school community.

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