

Parish CE Primary School

Early Years Foundation

Stage

Handbook



(Updated November 2025)

Our Christian Vision is:

Learning and Growing Together in Faith, Hope and Love.

Our Christian Vision and Values are central to each and every aspect of school life. With FAITH, HOPE and LOVE for all and in all we do, we trust God to guide both children and adults to reach their full potential in a nurturing and loving environment.

Our Early Years curriculum aims to:

- Support our children to develop strong communication, language and literacy skills
- Encourage our children to be creative, imaginative, resilient, independent and resourceful learners.
- Empower our children to understand, celebrate and respect different cultures and diversity
- Give our children the courage and desire to be positive role models to their peers

At The Parish CE Primary School, our Early Years provision consists of a Nursery and Reception Class. We are committed to providing a high-quality Early Years education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers the development of children from birth to the end of their Reception Year. The overarching aim of the EYFS is 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. This handbook is to support consistency in terms of the Learning and Teaching of the EYFS in our Foundation Stage.

Intent

The intention of our Early Years curriculum is to teach key knowledge which will help to develop fundamental skills across the seven areas of development and beyond. We want to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop independent and fearless lifelong learners.

Our bespoke seven rainbow promises to permeate through everything we do. We demonstrate this through rich and stimulating play, following the EYFS Framework and using Development Matters as a supporting document.

Implementation

We follow the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings. At The Parish CE Primary we recognise that:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

Children learn skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate their understanding through the seven areas of learning and development.

Children should mostly develop the three prime areas first. These are:

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

These prime areas are those most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in four specific areas. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World • Expressive Arts and Design.

Communication and Language

This covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundations for literacy skills. Children's developing competence in speaking and listening is focused on. We aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role-play and group discussions. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through

speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as working with puppets, saying rhymes and singing songs together.

We aim to provide meaningful contexts for communication and language in EYFS, following the ShREC Approach that supports and develops children's oral language and communication skills and encourage them to be resilient and independent learner through back and forth talk. We use the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-3) to develop enabling environments in our indoor and outdoor provision with high quality communication & language interactions, encouraging sustained shared thinking.

Children are highly encouraged and motivated to take part in creating their own fantastic stories using Tales Toolkit, their imagination and talking about the characters, setting, problem and solution of their stories. We encourage children to respect and celebrate diversity and support them in developing rich communication and language skills by understanding other cultures and beliefs through first hand experiences, books, celebrating festivals.

Physical Development

Children are given the opportunities to move to music, use equipment, develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills developing their confidence and skill. They develop an increasing understanding of how their body works and what they need to do to keep themselves healthy. Children also develop spatial awareness and coordination, whilst at the same time encouraging the fine motor skills that they will need to develop holistically. This is done both indoors and outdoors.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are encouraged to learn to work together, share, take turns and co-operate with others. Using stories, circle times and through conversation, children are supported with recognising, naming and regulating their emotions.

Children are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. Staff support children to develop the characteristics of effective learning, so children become resilient and persevere when they encounter challenges.

Children are also encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and to respect other cultures and beliefs. Children are enabled to become more confident and develop a positive self-image.

Literacy

We encourage children to treat books and other resources with respect. The children will experience a wide range of stories, books (fiction and nonfiction), rhymes and poetry. They are encouraged to use the mark-making equipment in all the different areas of the learning environments independently and take part in teacher-led activities. These activities include whole class shared reading and writing, phonics sessions and small group guided reading and writing activities.

In Reception we follow the Read to Write Scheme of work to support the children's literacy development. All literacy work is based around 'vehicle text', that is of high quality. The units of work centre on engaging, vocabulary-rich texts that support a wide range of writing opportunities. Many of the 'vehicle texts' used, also have strong thematic links to the other areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Phonics

At Parish CE Primary we aim to:

- To ensure the delivery of phonics is of high quality and is systematic
- To ensure there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics in a discrete session
- To give all children the most enriching phonics sessions allowing them to apply their phonic knowledge to both reading and writing
- To have opportunities to apply the skills they have learned throughout the day and in a rich learning environment
- To differentiate the teaching of phonics to enable outstanding progress to be made by all children.

We follow the 'RWI Phonics' programme and the order in which the sounds are taught for Reception Class.

In Nursery, children are taught phase 1 phonics and activities are embedded into the continuous provision to support children's learning and development. Children are also introduced to Fred games to develop segmenting and blending skills and the RWI routines, for example stop signal, my turn, your turn. In Summer Term One Nursery, children are also exposed to communication and language games and the RWI letter cards and rhymes.

In Reception, children are taught phonics using RWI scheme of work and work through Sets 1 and 2. All children in Reception are split into ability groups for phonic sessions.

Mathematics

All children are supported to develop their mathematical skills and language through mathematically rich learning environments, real life contexts, rhyme and stories. Children are provided with meaningful contexts for mathematics in EYFS, following long term plans and children's interests.

In Nursery, children use 'Master the Curriculum' and are introduced to a nursery rhyme each week which links to the topic of learning. Children are encouraged to use new vocabulary and demonstrate their knowledge and skills independently using a range of resources.

In Reception, children learn using 'Mastering Number' focussing on the principles of counting such as subitising. Alongside this Reception use 'Maths No Problem' to support with the teaching of shape, space and measure. All activities are taught to develop children's vocabulary, mathematical skills and independence.

Understanding the World

We provide opportunities for children to explore and learn about the world they live in. Children are encouraged to observe, solve problems, question, make decisions, experiment, predict, and plan in a variety of contexts. By facilitating different opportunities, we wish our children to find out about their environment. It helps to develop their senses, understanding and awe of their physical world. They learn about significant figures from the past, begin to discuss chronology, develop their understanding of their own and contrasting environments and where these sit in the world. We also make sure our children receive a range of 'first-hand' experiences to support their learning through use of our

Forest School and our 'Pots of Gold experiences'. Children will also explore the uses and impact of Information and communication technology on their everyday lives.

Expressive Arts and Design

Children will explore expressive arts and design across three strands: natural materials recreated, creative design and imaginative role play. Children will explore these areas of the curriculum by using a range of materials, tools and techniques using their imagination and creativity, and by experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. Opportunities to do this are provided through art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design, in which children represent their unique thoughts, ideas and feelings.

Impact

The impact is reflected in having well rounded, happy and confident children transitioning into year one. We measure progress and children's learning across the year through assessments based on teacher's knowledge of the children, through 'Evidence Me' observations.

Planning

To support children's learning we follow a Long-Term plan, supported by our knowledge planners and the children's interests. We also use 'In the moment planning' to ensure that we are focusing on children's next stages of learning and enhancing the provision to support their learning needs and interests. When planning, practitioners reflect on the Three Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- 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

The Learning Environment

The EYFS learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The environment is set up in learning areas, where children are easily able to find clearly labelled equipment and resources they need. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

Activities are planned for both inside and outside using our room provision plan using both the indoor and outdoor environment throughout the school day. The learning environment is divided into a variety of different areas, including designated areas for writing, mathematics, atelier, role play, physical activity, construction, small world and play dough area as well as reading area, calm corner, sand and water.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage has a shared and secure outdoor areas for both Nursery and Reception Classes. Being outdoors offers opportunities for children to do things in different ways and on different scales. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active

Inclusion

The diversity of individuals and communities is valued and respected. No child is discriminated against. Children with Special Educational Needs will be given appropriate support to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, those with specific learning difficulties and those with disabilities. Adaptive teaching takes place throughout directed teaching and continuous provision. Through use of our Quality First Teaching Toolkit, specific strategies are utilised to meet the needs of all learners. The school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is responsible for providing additional information and advice to parents/carers and practitioners and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.

Safeguarding

At Parish CE Primary School, the health, safety and welfare of our children are of paramount importance to us. We respect our pupils and want to provide them with a stimulating and safe environment that encourages them to flourish.

In order to keep our children safe at school, we ensure that all our staff - through their induction and on going training - have a clear understanding of their responsibilities towards our children's safeguarding

make sure that we have a range of clear and up to date policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety and protection of our pupils in all aspects of school life

ensure that we teach our pupils how to keep themselves healthy and safe - in and out of school

Ensure that we audit our safeguarding practices regularly, so we remain vigilant

We work with Merseyside Police to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children experiencing domestic abuse. This is called Operation Encompass, and you can find more information in the letter below. We also provide a range of support within school and from other services such as health and community support. This sometimes takes the form of an EHAT and you can find out more about our Early Help offer below.

Please do speak to a member of the Safeguarding Team if you or your child have been affected by any type of abuse; we are here to listen and can give you lots of information to support and help.

Parents as Partners

We appreciate that parents are children's first educators and we value the contribution they make.

We understand the role that parents have played and their future role in educating their child. We do this through:

- We provide all children with a series of visits to our school, so children have the opportunity to spend time with their peers and adults before starting school. (Please see transition policy)
- Inviting all families to parent's evenings to talk about their child's progress.
- Providing parents with log in codes so they can view their child's Learning Journey at home and upload observations about their child onto their child's Learning Journey on Evidence Me.
- We arrange a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Stay and Plays, and Events.