St. Andrew's
Church of England Primary School
ENRICHING LIVES

EYFS Curriculum Rationale

September 2022

1. Our Vision

We believe that every person in our school community should flourish and broaden their horizons. Therefore, it is the element of 'enrichment' that defines our school; we are a church school that endeavours to provide the widest of opportunities for all.

Within our caring and nurturing environment and guided by our shared Christian values, we aim to ensure that all voices in our school family can be heard and all are engaged in learning that develops and challenges them, excites their imagination and provides an opportunity to achieve their full potential.

We see everyone and everything as valued in the eyes of God and recognise that all the members of our family are individuals as we work together towards a society of mutual respect, compassion and justice.

Even the smallest person can change the course of the future." ..... JRR Tolkien

2. Christian Values

Teaching and learning at St. Andrew's reflects our Christian values. These are fundamental to St. Andrew's, and are very much intended to be 'real' to provide guidance, support and encouragement to all members of the school community:

- Generosity
- Compassion
- Courage
- Forgiveness
- Friendship
- Respect & Humility
- Thankfulness
- Trust
- Perseverance & Hope
- Justice
- Service & Responsibility
- Truthfulness

3. Our Aims

3.1 To achieve our vision we aim to nurture and support each member of our school family to:

- be a caring Christian community that teaches and promotes Christian values and welcomes all beliefs and none religious world views
- ensure our school is a safe and happy place where everyone is valued and achievements are celebrated

- encourage our children to ask questions, seek the answers and develop a love for learning;
- experience and enjoy a diverse and enriching range of opportunities
- promote a healthy lifestyle both mentally and physically
- reach the highest standards of academic achievement and fulfil individual goals
- use their imagination freely and creatively, and enjoy music and the arts;
- work collaboratively with the Church, and both the local and global community to care for the school and the world in which they live and seek to make it a better place

4. Introduction

4.1 Our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum has been designed to provide our pupils with a wide range of learning experiences and opportunities through both Nursery and the Reception Year. Through this curriculum, we aim to ensure all children are ready to begin their journey into Year One and further life at St. Andrew's.

4.2 Our varied learning themes ensure breadth and progression across all areas of learning. These then follow on to the themes of Key Stages One and Two at St. Andrew's. Our learning themes have linked texts using a range of both fiction and non-fiction books, opportunities for visitors into school and possible learning opportunities outside of school, such as a visit to the Aquarium, as well as visits within the local area. Our themes are, crucially, also flexible. This allows us to follow the interests of the children we welcome into St. Andrew's whilst still ensuring we maintain excellent coverage of areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The 'how' we approach our curriculum might alter but the 'why' will not.

4.3 Our Early Years curriculum is play based as this is how the youngest children learn most effectively. We teach through a range of continuous and enhanced provision, both inside and in our outdoor classrooms. However, this approach is also balanced with direct adult led teaching where appropriate. As an example, we teach discreet daily phonics and maths lessons in the Reception Year.

4.4 At St. Andrew's, we vary our teaching approaches to meet the needs of our pupils and achieve the intended learning outcomes. We may teach as a whole class, in small groups or one-to-one. We value the importance of strong relationships between peers and adults and recognise the positive impact on children's learning development that conversations and interactions have. We strive to support children through these positive interactions, knowing when to utilise effective questioning, when to support through guidance and when to 'step back' and let children explore. Through careful and considered planning, we ensure our curriculum provides opportunities for investigation, problem solving, questioning and play opportunities both collaboratively and independently.

5. Areas of Learning

5.1 Personal, Social and Emotional Development

At St. Andrew's, we want our children to be safe, happy and confident individuals. We model and encourage good behaviour throughout school and recognise the importance of consistent expectations and supporting children to understand their own feelings and behaviours. We use our school values and rewards to support our pupils. We celebrate the successes of children both in

and out of school for example through our 'Knights Awards'. We encourage even the youngest children to have a voice in our school, for example through the School Council. We promote wellbeing in all areas. This is also reinforced through the texts we share in class and when joining the rest of the school for our weekly 'Mindful Mondays' Collective Worships. In addition to this, our regular circle times are an important time for pupils to share, listen and reflect.

5.2 Physical Development

5.2.1 We recognise the importance of healthy bodies and minds. We are fortunate to have two super, well-resourced outdoor classrooms in addition to the spacious outdoor areas of St. Andrew's. We provide daily opportunities for children to run, explore and climb in these wonderful settings. In addition, our Reception children have weekly PE lessons providing opportunities to use a range of equipment such as large apparatus, footballs and dance. In the summer term, we visit the local swimming pool at Jubilee Park for swimming lessons.

5.2.2 We encourage healthy eating and personal hygiene, including oral hygiene, through our daily routines as well as specific themes.

5.2.3 Children at St. Andrew's are supported with developing fine motor control through the teaching of handwriting, use of tools such as cutlery, scissors, trowels, mark making, finger gym and even 'Dough Discos'!

5.3 Communication and Language

5.3.1 At St. Andrew's, we strive for all children to be effective communicators. We encourage good listening from an early age with regular story times, Collective Worships, games and through provision such as role play areas. We model and introduce new vocabulary linked to learning themes and experiences as well as the world around us.

5.3.2 Children who may find communication more difficult are identified and supported early on through Speech and Language intervention programmes such as WellComm and NELI.

5.3.3 We encourage all children to contribute to class discussions and, as previously mentioned, we recognise and promote the crucial role of adult interactions during the school day.

5.4 Phonics and Reading

5.4.1 Developing a love of reading is a wonderful privilege to share with children. We recognise that a love of reading stems from modelling and sharing books regularly with pupils and moreover books and texts from a range of genres such as non-fiction and poetry. These may also link with our learning themes.

5.4.2 At St. Andrew's, we teach children to read though a well-planned and considered phonics programme. Our daily phonics lessons are also supported with matched reading books for children to share at home in the Reception Year and through children borrowing books to take home throughout EYFS.

In addition to our phonics lessons, our provision provides further opportunities for pupils to put their phonic skills into practise.

5.4.3 We also work closely with the local library, taking children to visit and choose a book as well as welcoming the librarians into school.

5.5 Writing

5.5.1 We encourage children to mark make with a range of apparatus such as chalks, pencils and crayons though provision and adult led learning experiences throughout Early Years. We ensure there are writing opportunities in a range of areas in the classroom, such as the role play area as well as our bespoke 'Writing Den' in the outdoor classroom.

5.5.2 To build upon these early writing opportunities, in Reception, we often teach writing linked to our learning themes, for example, making a list for the Little Red Hen to make bread or to write a letter encouraging our families to recycle at home.

5.5.3 We aim to provide children with the skills and knowledge to write independently, utilising their phonic and common exception word knowledge in their writing.

5.6 Mathematics

5.6.1 Our provision and daily routines support our mathematical teaching at St. Andrew's, both inside and in the outdoor classrooms.

5.6.2 Children in Nursery enjoy number songs, mathematical based provision as well as adult led learning experiences exposing children to number, reciting numbers, shape games and simple concepts of calculations such as peek-a-boo and basic subitising.

5.6.3 In Reception, we use resources and inspiration from White Rose and NCETM. These are then adapted to suit the needs of the pupils we are teaching. We begin with understanding numbers and their cardinal number value before moving on to calculations, number bonds, doubling and halving.

5.6.4 We also teach children about 2D and 3D shape, weight, measures and pattern.

5.7 Understanding of the World

5.7.1 Our varied learning themes provide opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the local area, the world they might experience living in Woodhall Spa and then the wider world outside their own experiences and indeed beyond the UK. We hope that by providing such a range, pupils will develop their own sense of our community, local churches, the environment and how to care for it. This is then compared with other places and people in the world.

5.7.2 We encourage children to be curious learners and provide opportunities for children to explore the 'how' of different things, such as how seeds grow, life cycles, colours used in pens and so on.

5.7.3 At St. Andrew's, we also recognise the importance of using technology to support learning. Alongside this, we promote the safe use of using such technology. We include regular, age-appropriate e-safety education within our curriculums.

5.8 Expressive Arts and Design

5.8.1 We are very proud of the music opportunities at St. Andrew's, and these begin in Early Years. We provide children with opportunities to explore pitch, rhythm and a variety of percussion instruments through our provision and in discreet music lessons.

5.8.2 In addition to our provision opportunities, we encourage children to explore texture, colour and form through using a wide variety of materials and resources. Further to this, our learning themes include taking inspiration from famous artists such as Matisse, Frida Kahlo and Monet.

Examples of our Early Years Learning Themes are to be found below.

6. Learning through play and teachable moments

At St Andrew's , we aim to provide a balance between child-initiated play, and well-informed responses to teachable moments. We offer a broad range of experiences to the children in order to stimulate their interest, facilitate meaningful communication and promote purposeful, interactive play. We offer a balanced curriculum to extend their thinking processes. Staff are aware of the benefits of sustaining a dialogue with the children either individually (responding to questions and asking open questions) or as a group (with shared thinking themes threading through the routines of the class).

7. Inclusion and diverse needs

St Andrew's has an open admissions policy. Diversity is celebrated. Individual children are enabled to reach their full potential through differentiated approaches to learning. We strive to offer equal access to the curriculum and equal opportunities to experience success to all of the children in our care. All children should feel that all activities are open to them. Resources should reflect the diverse cultures in our world as well as those represented within the school.

8. Our learning environment

At St Andrew's, we are aware that both the physical surroundings and the ethos of the school affect the children's ability to learn. Members of staff working in the EYFS are responsible for preparing a welcoming, safe and enabling environment within their classrooms and the outdoor spaces. This includes offering a range of activities that the children can reach and select themselves. The ethos should be warm and accepting, whilst encouraging children to reach their full potential.

9. Safeguarding and Welfare

St Andrew's has a Safeguarding Policy and its provisions apply to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

10. Role of the EYFS Lead Teacher

The role of the Head of EYFS is to provide professional leadership for the Early Years in order to facilitate the highest standards of teaching and learning and to secure effective use of resources. This will involve:

- monitoring of pupil progress
- pupil conferencing
- analysing data
- taking the lead in policy development
- auditing, purchasing and organising resources
- supporting colleagues in their CPD
- keeping up to date with recent developments in the area
- checking that assessment of the EYFSP is carried out in line with the school's agreed pratice

11. Monitoring and Review

The EYFS will be monitored in line with the School Development and Improvement Plan by the EYFS Lead teacher in the first instance. The EYFS team regularly discuss EYFS practice, providing feedback raising any issues that require discussion.

12. Communication/dissemination of the Policy

The policy will be disseminated in the following ways:

- School Web Site
- Staff Meetings
- By request
- By school mailings