



Early Years Foundation Stage



Approved by:	Gemma Ellis
Last reviewed on:	September 2024
Next review due by:	September 2026

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is used to describe children who are in our Reception year group.





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Aims

At English Martyrs CV Academy we aim for all our children to become confident, articulate, powerful thinkers and learners in a high quality, safe, nurturing and inclusive environment. We know our youngest children learn best through play and first-hand practical experiences and this understanding is evident and rigorously delivered. We ensure a happy, nurturing and productive learning environment is provided, with 'not a minute lost' throughout the day. This begins with the warm welcome on the door, the established routines to develop independence and responsibility, positive relationships with high quality interaction, wow days to instil a love of learning and inspiring provision to stimulate child- initiated learning. We understand our crucial role in building secure foundations, both in terms of learning and development but also in the relationships we build with our families. We work tirelessly to build trust and positive attitudes to learning and to our school. We understand our work is the very first step into the whole school and is pivotal to each child's success. Therefore, the curriculum within the EYFS complements and creates the foundations for the rest of the school as we have an in depth understanding of the cultural capital needed for future success, developing them both holistically and academically and know this not limited to knowledge and skills acquisition but also the attitudes that will drive their motivation to learn. The Foundation Stage prepares children for learning in Key Stage 1 and is consistent with the National Curriculum. We aim to secure a smooth transition to Key Stage 1.

The Foundation stage is based around four key principles:

A Unique Child

Positive Relationships

Enabling Environments

Learning and Development

A Unique Child

Each child is an individual who develops and learns at their own rate, and this is supported through planning. Every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships

Children learn best when they feel safe and secure. We build positive relationships with all children and their parents and ensure the children build positive



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relationships with each other. Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and teachers.

Enabling Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. We take pride in making sure our environments are seen and used as the 'third teacher' to facilitate child-initiated learning through play.

Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected. The children require a balance of adult-led, independent and child-initiated activities to achieve a good level of progress by the end of their Reception year.

Our Curriculum

Our curriculum has been designed using the Early Year statutory framework from the DfE and Development Matters. We use them as a 'Point in Time Assessment' to inform our planning and next steps for the children. There is a clear progression throughout our curriculum which is easy to navigate.

'Talk for Learning' is a palpable in the setting where talk is used effectively to present information, identify misconceptions, promote discussion and enable teachers to check learner's understanding. This is also supported by excellent modelling; intentional vocabulary extensions provide narratives to what children are doing and sentences starters to ensure children communicate in whole sentences. Staff skilfully adapts teaching when necessary and expertly respond to children's contributions based on their individual needs.

The foundation stage curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning, three prime areas and four specific areas. It is important for children to develop a good level of the prime areas to enable them to achieve a good level in the specific areas. All staff recognises this and if there are any concerns the class teacher will discuss this with parents/carers and agree how best to support the child.



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The three prime areas are:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This area of learning is about emotional well-being, knowing who you are and where you fit in and feeling good about yourself. It is also about developing respect for others, social competence and a positive disposition to learning.

PSE development feeds into all subjects of the national curriculum.

Physical Development

This area of learning includes gross and fine motor physical activity which develops an awareness and increased control of children's own bodies.

Physical Development leads into the National Curriculum for Physical Education.

Communication and Language

This area of learning includes speaking and listening, attention and understanding, where we have a big focus on vocabulary from a range of texts, fiction, non-fiction, poems and rhymes. We take pride in introducing new vocabulary daily for children to build on their conversational skills.

The four specific areas are:

Maths - Number and Number Patterns

This area of learning builds on children number and number patterns knowledge.

They are explicitly taught how to spot the pattern in the counting system, and what numbers are made up of using composition and Subitising. Our curriculum still includes shape, space and measure; although non-statutory we have an ambitious curriculum to prepare children for Year 1.

Literacy

This area of learning includes; comprehension, word reading and writing. We plan for high-quality, stimulating continuous provision and exceptionally engaging adult-led sessions to support children's literacy learning.

Understanding of the World

In this area of learning children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world around them. Knowledge and understanding of the world forms the foundation for later work in Science, Design and Technology, History, Geography and Computing.

Expressive Art and Design



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This area of learning includes art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative play. Creative Development leads into the National Curriculum for Art and Design, Physical Education, Music and Design and Technology.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

There are three characteristics of effective learning, and these are:

- Playing and exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

These three characteristics underpin the way children learn, and we ensure these are incorporated into teaching, learning and the environment. Each fortnightly cycle there will be a focus of each one. In our curriculum each one is broken down into three areas:

Playing and exploring

- Finding out and exploring
- Using what you know in play
- Being willing to have a go

Active Learning

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keep on trying
- Enjoying achieving what you set out to do

Creating and Thinking Critically

- Having own ideas
- Using what you already know to learn new things
- Choosing ways to do things and finding new ways

Planning

To inform our planning we use the EYFS long term plan, which informs our medium term planning to create fortnightly plans. These plans link to the 'driver text', which is carefully planned to support the learning, using the children's interests. Our planning is meticulous in order to utilise all opportunities for all children. Therefore we adjust our planning in response to our observations that can include minor alterations to include new or recent fascinations, to more considerable changes such as whole topics. For example a travel/journey topic was changed to looking at society roles to reflect the children's lockdown experiences of COVID-19.



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Learning Environment

The environment, adult led sessions, methods and provision is specifically designed to embed concepts to the long-term memory for children. This includes the revisiting and retrieving in daily Basic skills and phonics sessions but for us in Early years, this also includes the repetitive practice of fastening their own coats, remembering where things go in the classroom or words and actions to songs or teachers making intentional mistakes for the children to recognise and correct, for instance. All adults use all available opportunities to do this e.g. waiting to go in the lunch hall. Staff create an environment that supports the intent of an ambitious, coherently planned and sequenced curriculum that includes technology and shape, space and measure that is non-statutory, to ensure our children are effectively prepared for year 1. The resources are chosen to meet the children's needs and promote learning and this is evident in our highly stimulating environment. The Foundation Stage also has a designated outside area. The use of the outdoor play area is planned for in the same way as other subjects. Displays, provision, visual prompts and manipulatives evidently show and support the learning and development needs for our children across all seven areas of the curriculum both indoors and outdoors. We select excellent resources, whilst minimising set up, so that staff are free to invest time and energy into high quality interactions during the day. Resources are linked purposely to children's current knowledge and skills progression, whilst also providing a variety of open-ended scenarios so that children can follow their own imagination or lines of enquiry, and can be challenged or supported at any given moment.

Inclusion

At English Martyrs we believe that the equality of opportunity is important for all pupils irrespective of gender, ethnicity, social circumstances, religion or belief and intellectual capacity. Within the Foundation Stage we strive to reflect and respect this diversity in our choice of resources and in the model we set for children. We strive to plan an environment for a child that is free from stereotypical images and discriminatory practices. In this way and through appropriate differentiation we aim to meet the needs of all pupils.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage

On entry to reception the Foundation Stage staff assesses the children through the statutory baseline within six weeks of the children starting at English Martyrs'. Each half term we assess our children against all seven areas of the EYFS curriculum using the new 'Point in Time Assessments' we have developed to record these



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using the online assessment tool 'Insight'. This effectively helps us take action quickly, monitor children's progress more closely and plan for intervention, meaningful topics and the environment and to further inform our teaching. Although, we monitor children as a team, we have moderated judgements of our EYFS curriculum with other schools in the SRSCMAT to ensure accuracy of judgements, expectations and that learning is being carefully sequenced to all children to build on their learning over time.

Safety

Our children's safety and welfare is paramount at English Martyrs'. We create a safe and secure environment for all children that teach them how to be safe, take risks and make choices of their own. This is embedded throughout our curriculum, which enables children to manage self. We have policies and procedures in place that ensure children's safety.

Please refer to our separate policies on Health and Safety & Child Protection.

Transitions

At English Martyrs' we have rigorous transitions in place to ensure a smooth, stress-free experience for the children and parents as much as possible. Therefore, transitions are planned for carefully and strategically to ensure the best for all children. We acknowledge that building strong partnerships with other settings, such as, nurseries and child minders benefits children the most. As we have a variety of feeder nurseries, a member of staff will visit the child at their setting in the summer term before their visit to school to meet their teacher and see their new setting. We sit down with the child's key person to discuss each child to build a picture of them in order for our school to meet their needs as much as possible. We hold a meeting with parents of the new starters in the summer term to provide, key information, knowledge of our curriculum, school expectations and it gives them a chance to ask any questions. At the beginning of reception there is a staggered start for all new starters, which includes, the first two days just the morning, the 3 day they stay for lunch and the 4th and 5th day they stay all day. Throughout the reception year, the children have the opportunity to meet the Key Stage 1 staff through storytelling time and on the playground to build positive relationships before their transition into year 1. In the summer term, the EYFS and Key Stage 1 teachers meet to discuss each child's development against the Early Learning goals. This is to enable a smooth transition into Year 1 and the Year 1 teachers can plan an effect, appropriate and responsive curriculum to meet the needs and development of all children.



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