



**Headteacher**  
MR MATTHEW BOWN

**Deputy Head Teacher**  
MRS CAROLINE NEWELL

**Chair of Governors**  
MRS JAN PRINGLE

### Intent Statement

Learning in the EYFS at St. Paul's starts with the child; our curriculum changes and develops to reflect the individual needs of the children as they progress through Nursery and/or Reception.

It is our intention that through a balanced approach of child initiated and adult led learning, supported by an enhanced provision planning and underpinned by sustained, shared thinking and the use of research driven practices ( E.g.ShREC Approach, Concept Cat, Literacy Tree), the curriculum will be adapted to reflect the individual needs of each cohort. We base much of a planning around core texts.

Learning takes place in meaningful contexts across the seven areas of learning, supporting all our children to become **thoughtful and reflective learners** and promoting a lifelong love of learning. We will work in partnership with families to support our children to with their transitions to Nursery, into Reception and beyond; enabling children to grow as individuals, and to develop key skills such as **independence**, resilience as well as their communication skills. We aim to foster a sense of **curiosity** and **creativity** and a positive, **responsible** attitude to growing their learning. Whilst with us, we encourage children to become **risk takers** who develop resilience.

Across EYFS at St. Paul's there will be a strong focus on developing **effective communication and language skills**. We will build on the language development of children through the promotion of conversations, with a strong focus on linking their language skills to growing their skills of listening and responding appropriately to stories and rhymes enabling them to develop a love of reading.

Children in our Early Years phase follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, which consists of seven areas of learning.

#### Communication and Language experiences are about:

- Listening, attention and Understanding
- Speaking

#### Personal, Social and Emotional experiences are about:

- Self Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

#### Physical Development experiences are about:

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills





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### Literacy experiences are about:

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

### Mathematics experiences are about:

- Number
- Numerical Patterns

### Understanding the World experiences are about:

- Past and Present
- People, Cultures and Communities

### Expressive Arts & Design experiences are about:

- Creating with Materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive

Our EYFS staff team work with all children in our EYFS unit (Nursery and Reception). We recognise that all children develop and learn at different rates and so our EYFS curriculum is designed flexibly to meet the needs of all individuals though a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In planning and guiding children's activities, all practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. We support individual learning through our skilful interactions and observations. Adults working in EYFS at St. Paul's support children through the team's shared values of being **kind** and **respectful**, a **patient** and **effective listener** and engaging with **positivity** to **encourage** all children.

### Progression in Learning and Development

Using progression models, and 'Common play Behaviours' we aim to build on the skills and strengths inherent in our children, encouraging them to grow their learning and to develop their skills, understanding and knowledge in an appropriate manner. We acknowledge that developmental steps missed at this early crucial stage are much harder to address later and we place an emphasis on consolidation and deepening development prior to moving on with new next steps in learning.





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## Implementation

### Pedagogy – How we help our children to learn at St. Paul's

We know that all children can progress in their learning given the right help and support. Our EYFS environment at St. Paul's is carefully organised to enable high-quality play, nurture and challenge both indoors and outside. Our 'Learning Garden' approach enables all children to 'grow their learning' through a balanced approach based on the knowledge that children learn through play, modelling, observing one another and through a balanced approach to guided, direct teaching and a well-planned learning environment.

Adults at St. Paul's encourage children to grow their learning in many ways across the whole range of contexts and all areas of learning. These include but are not limited to:

- Valuing each child as an individual, assessing their own needs and interests; enabling them to make progress
- Working in partnership with parents and carers and valuing their contributions
- Creating a rich, safe and caring environment indoors and outside; bringing the outside in through neutral, calming tones.
- Providing an environment that is sensitive and adjustable to the needs of individual children including those with additional needs.
- Creating a communication friendly environment where learning is supported signs, symbols or gestures.
- Providing opportunities to develop language.
- Setting challenges and allowing time and space to solve their own problems
- Demonstrating how to do things and directly teaching new skills
- Asking open ended questions and discussing
- Encouraging collaboration
- Guiding learning in a playful and joyful way; providing opportunities for children to learn through planned and purposeful play
- Commenting on what children are doing
- Scaffolding learning; knowing when to step in or step back
- Responding to individual interests and needs appropriately
- Providing a curriculum that provides a firm foundation to be built on through Key Stage 1 and beyond.

### Sustained Shared Thinking

At St. Pauls we often use the practice of Sustained Shared Thinking to scaffold learning.

This is defined as:

'an episode in which two or more individuals work together in an intellectual way to solve a problem, clarify a concept, evaluate activities, extend a narrative etc. Both parties must contribute to the thinking, and it must develop and extend'.

Adults at St. Paul's tune into learners by listening carefully and showing genuine interest. They speculate and reciprocate as well as model thinking and ask open questions.





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### Planning, Observation and Assessment

At St. Paul's our pedagogy is responsive allowing us to recognise and build on what the children know, understand, and can do. It provides challenges in a stimulating environment and through adult interaction enables pupils to demonstrate their learning in a wide range of contexts. As adults we take part in interactions involving listening, guiding, explaining, and asking appropriate, open ended questions. We tune in to children and enable them to apply skills and concepts with increasing independence allowing their learning to become embedded. As children plan how they will take part in activities they are developing the skills of self-regulation and executive function. Adults are involved in this process through observing and interacting with children as they act on their own interests and fascinations.

In EYFS formative assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. Starting with the child we reflect the different rates and ways in which children learn, adjusting our practice accordingly to account of the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning and 'Learning Behaviours' Ongoing formative assessment takes place continually involving observing the children in many different contexts and using these observations to understand how they are developing, learning, and growing. Often observations are fleeting and, in the moment with next steps shared verbally as part of the play rather than being physically recorded. We observe as interactions take place in play, everyday activities, the environment, with peers and adults and in adult directed learning. These observations are used to guide our professional judgement; enabling us to support further development in an appropriate manner.

At St. Paul's, we use scaffolding to support this through the use of planning in the moment during our child-initiated learning (Free Flow sessions). Staff reflect on how much support children need and when to step back. Our adults move the learning on in that moment through well-judged direction, sustained shared thinking etc.

**We firmly believe that to plan with children in the moment, we as adults need to be fully engaged with them in the moment** rather than behind a device or notebook. A written account of some of these interactions becomes part of a shared learning journey which is then discussed and reviewed with children during times of reflection on their learning. Group notes, observations, and photos etc are kept in large books or 'floor books', as well as mark making journals (Reception) and individual journals focusing on the prime areas (Nursery).

Time is spent sharing information between home and school during termly parent meetings and on informal occasions with EYFS staff. Parents and carers are given





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opportunities to explore Phonics and Early Reading as well as Maths and Fine Motor development through workshops at intervals throughout the year.

**Communication and Language** is a fundamental core skill. It is the key to enabling children to achieve and provides the strong foundations for future learning. It is promoted through a language rich ethos and environment in which adults narrate, ask questions, model thinking, provide a running commentary, repeat, and extend language and give children reasons and a desire to talk. New and ambitious vocabulary linked to the theme is identified, introduced, and used within the environment in the form of words and sentences acting often in the form of visual prompts for adults and children.

- A 'Wonder Box' is used to display intriguing objects and pictures and children are encouraged to describe, discuss and ask questions about what they see.
- The **Investigation Area** is used to pose questions and extend language through observing change, growth and new life.
- **Enhancements and provocations** are regularly added to all areas of the provision as a stimulus to inspire interest and engage children in talk e.g., setting up a scenario in the Role Play area such as a party to encourage discussion and problem solving.

Within the provision adults promote opportunities for children to communicate through talk. Across EYFS, CL is also taught through direct teaching during group times as well as during stories and rhymes. 'Concept Cat' is also used to support language development in small groups across the whole phase. Adults model the qualities of a good communicator and searching for and capitalising on opportunities to engage with children in conversation. Early assessments of language development through the Welcomm Screening Tool take place with trained members of the EYFS team and activities for those pupils who need additional support in these areas will be planned. Little Wandle Rhyme Time sessions take place during the week.

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development** is highly valued and underpinned by our school values and vision, as well as the Characteristics of effective learning. We promote positive relationships with families, children and their peers to support children's emotional well-being this begins with our transition programme. Information is collected about each child through on-site visits, taster sessions, visiting other settings and discussions with parents, carers and staff. Things to do before you're 5' This information helps to focus learning and development in the first few weeks of term and beyond.

- On entry quality time is spent establishing **clear structures, routines and boundaries**.
- The **timetable** is planned so that children get to know their new environment and **build trusting relationships** with adults.
- **The environment** is set up to promote independent learning, encouraging children to make their own informed decisions and choices.

Adults understand how to create a nurturing climate and ethos through showing respect,, fairness, and a consistent approach. They listen carefully to children, responding to their needs, helping them to understand their emotions and empathising and communicating effectively with their





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families. Using the Thrive approach, Jigsaw PHSE and Taking Care/ Protective Behaviours children across the phase are supported to develop self-regulation, executive function, self-respect and a positive approach to mental health.

**Physical Development** is vital in across EYFS and is promoted through:

- Weekly **PE** sessions.
- Daily **'Squiggle Whilst You Wriggle'** session to develop whole body movement in readiness for more formal handwriting.
- **Finger Gym** area offering a range of challenges that develop wrist and finger strength, finger isolation and pincer grip.
- Opportunities to work on **different surfaces, at different heights** to promote core and wrist strength.
- Access to a range of **tools for mark making as well as other one handed equipment.**
- Providing **authentic resources** throughout the provision e.g. real kitchen equipment.
- Equipping the outdoor area with a base layer of resources to promote balance and upper body strength e.g. **texture trails, and self-made obstacle courses as well as weighty items.**
- **Handwriting** taught as a discrete session in addition to daily Phonics in Reception.

Adults are knowledgeable about how physical development progresses and the key aspects of gross and fine motor skills. They know that fine motor development relies on children having well developed gross motor strength and recognise the strong links between physical development and the ability to control and manipulate writing tools. Within the environment adults actively encourage children to build their strength, stamina, balance, co-ordination, and dexterity. A value is also placed on access to the outdoors improving mental health and healthy lifestyles.

**Mathematics** is valued and promoted through daily direct teaching using *White Rose Maths* and *NCETM Mastering Number* for Reception and drawing on key elements and strategies of *White Rose Maths for Nursery*. Children have easy access to relevant maths resources to enable children to practise and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills.

- A **Maths Base** is situated within the provision. It offers a variety of **open-ended resources** that promote a conceptual understanding of number encouraging children to become confident and fluent.
- The **resources are thoughtfully organised** on open shelves so that children can see what and how many are available, access them independently and tidy up time can be optimised as an opportunity to practise and rehearse number skills. This is continued in the outdoor environment.

At St. Paul's we know that **maths can be taught everywhere** and that the conceptual understanding of number is the basis for all other mathematical learning. We also know that high quality maths learning takes place with an adult. Within the environment adults capitalise on opportunities to present mathematical problems for children to think about and solve. They work on developing





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children's mathematical oracy skills. Adults support children in practising and applying their mathematical knowledge and skills by encouraging them to talk about their thinking, provide explanations and give reasons for their answers.

**Literacy - Reading** and the enjoyment of books is highly valued and promoted through daily direct teaching in the form of Little Wandle phonics sessions, stories and Rhyme Time rhymes as well as a weekly poem (Poetry Basket) Opportunities for children to read within the provision and across the curriculum are also planned for and include 1:1 reading, home reading, shared reading in linked learning times, reading in child-initiated play.. Additional supporting texts are also used to expand knowledge and develop imagination. New and ambitious vocabulary is introduced. We ensure that children are **immersed in different genres** of books promoting an enjoyment of reading, extending their vocabulary and cultivating their imagination.

- **Relevant fiction and non-fiction texts** for children to reference knowledge and stimulate ideas.
- **Reading Areas** are situated within the provision. They offer a selection of fiction and non-fiction material and resources connected to the theme, texts from the reading scheme and familiar rhymes and stories. The resources are carefully selected and organised on open shelves so that they are visually inviting to children and adults and allow for thoughtful choices. Children have access to books linked to their stage of phonics development.
- **Props** linked to key texts are displayed in the provision to promote oral and sequential retelling of familiar stories either in the **small world, puppet theatre, home corner or construction areas**. **Non-fiction** texts are located in construction areas, the Creative Area and Discovery Area.
- **Concept Cat**

We recognise the strong links between reading and phonics and how these lifelong skills enable children to develop knowledge in other subjects. They draw children's attention to text, demonstrate that it has meaning and model the enjoyment of reading.

**Literacy - Writing** is promoted through direct teaching and purposeful learning opportunities across all areas of learning in EYFS in and all areas of provision. Consideration is given to the next steps in learning and how children have opportunities to **rehearse and refine their writing** skills. New and ambitious vocabulary is used and displayed within the phase.

- Access to a range of **tools for mark making and one-handed equipment** including writing pencils and clipboards and paper in all areas
- Each area of the provision is equipped with **relevant writing resources** such as paper, envelopes etc
- A '**message centre**' equipped with writing and mark making resources for children to explore.





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- **Sensory resources** to develop children's confidence and enjoyment in early writing skills.

Whilst children are developing their core stability, adults encourage mark making in positions where they feel most comfortable e.g., standing, or lying; they recognise the strong links between physical and communication skills and emerging writers. Within the environment adults actively encourage children to practise and develop **gross and fine motor skills and oral communication** in readiness for writing. By modelling, suggesting, and encouraging they promote ways in which children can record their ideas in different ways. We recognise and use the links across Literacy between reading, spelling, and writing.

**Understanding the World - History** Through the use of themes linked to key texts, provocations, enhancements and unplanned moments that present themselves we support children to talk about **artefacts, personal histories and significant events** to develop a conceptual understanding of the passing of time. These include birthdays, recent events, and experiences as well as well-known points in history for example, events in their own lives and in the lives of people familiar to them, dinosaurs, Bonfire Night or transport. Children are encouraged to share historical artefacts and events from the past. Adults know and understand historical language. They take every opportunity to model historical vocabulary and teach historical skills encouraging children to ask questions, compare similarities and differences and draw conclusions.

**Understanding the World - Geography** Through the use of themes linked to key texts, provocations, enhancements, and unplanned moments that present themselves we support children to talk about places, communities, and the natural world, to develop an appreciation of the world in which they live. These include where they live and their school, their local community, and interesting local places e.g., parks, river, library. Within the provision we ensure that children have constant access to **world and local maps and globes** and understand how to use them. We make connections with children's first-hand experiences to exemplify where children live, where they have visited, holidays they have had, wider global events and countries they have found out about. Children are encouraged to expand their knowledge of the natural world by capitalising on every opportunity to explore and experience the outdoors.

**Understanding the World - Science** Children are supported to talk about themes such as living things, materials and changes. These include natural objects, new life, growth, and space. Opportunities are provided for children to practise and apply scientific knowledge and skills through investigation and exploration in all areas of the provision. They have access to an '**Investigation Area**' that includes mechanical toys, items linked to **seasonal changes and the weather, programmable toys, and ICT**. Adults know the characteristics of a good scientist. They model technical language and scientific behaviours and attitudes encouraging children to ask questions, test out ideas, carry out investigations and draw conclusions. Children have the opportunity to take part in Science and DT week activities.

**Understanding the World – RE** As a Church of England school, we followed the local agreed syllabus (SACRE) and Understanding Christianity units of work. RE is taught as a discrete lesson and encourages pupil's awareness of a range of religions, faiths, cultures, and festival. Through the teaching of RE our pupils develop an understanding of the views and experiences of others,





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consideration, and respect. RE teaching from in Nursery and Reception is supported using [artefacts, photos, pictures, visits, drama art and music](#).

**Expressive Arts and Design – Art** We use planned and unplanned moments to talk about and explore line, shapes, colour, form and texture. We study a range of artistic styles including those of illustrators for familiar texts to provide us with opportunities to learn about different techniques and styles. We use artworks as a stimulus for the development of children's own creativity. Pupils are regularly encouraged to engage in observational drawing. Additionally, we encourage children to engage in the process of exploring artistic tools, techniques and processes; allowing them to reflect on their own work and the work of others. Creative areas are resourced with a [wide range of tools, media and materials](#) and are organised in a way that encourages children to be independent in their choices and decisions. We recognise and use the links between Art and gross and fine motor development and provide vertical surfaces and large areas where children can stand enabling them to have greater stability and more control over the tools they are using.

**Expressive Arts and Design -Design Technology** During their time in EYFS we provide children with a purpose to design, make and evaluate. We encourage and support them to create products through building, cooking, modelling and making. Children are given opportunities to experiment with attaching and joining and to investigate how things work. The ['Construction Area' \(inside and outdoors\)](#) and ['Creative Area'](#) are resourced with a wide range of equipment and tools. Resources are organised in a way that encourages children to be independent in their choices and decisions and to use their knowledge to find solutions and use resources in unique and innovative ways. Resources to promote planning and design are available and these areas provide stimulus for the sining process such as [photographs, instructions, or artefacts](#).

**Expressive Arts and Design -Music** Singing is an integral part of the daily routines and children are taught new songs as well as practising songs they already know. Over the year they develop a wide repertoire of songs and rhymes that they know by heart. Music is resourced with a [range of untuned and tuned musical instruments and beaters, familiar songs and rhymes and equipment](#) to play music It is organised in a way that encourages children to be curious about sound and confident in experimenting with ways of combining different sounds. Opportunities for making their own instruments occur both inside and outdoors. We recognise and use the links between Dance and Music and provide children the space where they are encouraged to perform themselves and appreciate others' performances.

**Expressive Arts and Design – Dance** We recognise the direct link between Dance and Physical Development and use the discreet sessions to practise balance and coordination through core work, building strength, crossing the midline and symmetrical movements. We use links to festivals and Saints Days and the relationship between Dance and Music as a stimulus to provide opportunities for children to experiment with and create their own dance movements. Children also have access to a [space, instruments, recorded music, costumes and props](#) where they are encouraged to be inventive, imaginative and perform themselves and appreciate others' performances.





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Adults promote children's creativity, imagination, originality and problem solving by valuing their ideas and encouraging freedom of expression. They support and facilitate opportunities for children to make connections in their learning, talk about processes, rehearse, refine, take risks, and develop skills and artistic knowledge.

### Impact

Summative assessment at St. Paul's takes place regularly encompassing practitioner's professional judgements and knowledge as well as formative assessments such as observations. During each year in EYFS children are assessed as **'on track'** or **'not on track'** in working towards achieving a **'Good Level of Development'** at the end of their Reception year. We consider an overall picture of each individual child for this with a holistic professionally formed view that gives attention to knowledge, skills, emotional development, well-being, and attitudes to learning. When making summative assessment we assess in 'milestones' (in the form of learning garden flowers) linked to our progression models. Where there are concerns, we are able to act upon them appropriately.

Our regular summative assessments enhance the development of the children. For example, where a child is not on track, further detailed formative observations will take place accompanied by sensitive interventions such as Time to Talk with outside agency support called upon if necessary. Summative assessments inform the further development of our provision and practice; feeding in to both our provision for adult led and guided learning as well as child-initiated learning and our development as practitioners.

At the end of the Reception pupils have a statutory assessment. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile with children being assessed at having achieved 'expected' or 'emerging' against all 17 Early Learning Goals and subsequently if they have achieved a 'Good Level of Development' (Expected in all ELGS in the three Prime areas plus Literacy and Mathematics.) This is shared with parents in the end of Reception report as well as with Key Stage 1 teachers; enabling suitable provision to be made for pupils as they continue to build on grow their learning from Year 1 onwards. Parents / carers have the opportunity to discuss the end of year report and to play an active part in transition to Year 1 through an Open Evening in the Summer Term.





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Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, *"Let the little children come to me"*  
We are all equally important, listened to and loved by God.

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