

St John and St Francis Church School

EYFS Curriculum Overview – Long-Term Plan

Reception | Autumn • Spring • Summer

Curriculum Intent

At St John and St Francis Church School Early Years, we are passionate about giving every child the best possible start to their education. We are committed to ensuring equity of access for all children, regardless of background, starting point or prior experience, and we celebrate each child's individual developmental journey.

Rooted in our Christian values, we nurture confident, happy, independent and reflective learners who demonstrate kindness, respect and responsibility and grow into caring members of their community.

Communication and language are at the heart of our curriculum. We recognise that strong oracy and vocabulary development underpin future learning. Children are immersed in high-quality interactions and purposeful talk across all areas of learning, informed by approaches such as Voice 21. We develop children's ability to listen, express themselves, build vocabulary and communicate effectively.

Our curriculum is carefully designed and coherently sequenced so that children build knowledge, skills and understanding progressively over time. Learning is revisited and embedded so that children can recall, apply and extend what they know with increasing independence.

We believe children learn best through a balance of purposeful play, direct teaching and rich continuous provision. Our indoor and outdoor environments are thoughtfully planned to spark curiosity, encourage problem-solving and promote creativity, resilience and sustained engagement. Adults model, scaffold and extend learning through high-quality interactions.

We provide ambitious and meaningful experiences that broaden children's horizons, build cultural capital and develop a strong sense of belonging within their community and the wider world. Our curriculum reflects children's interests and experiences while introducing them to people, places, ideas and experiences beyond their immediate lives.

Through this carefully considered curriculum, we develop children's knowledge, communication, confidence, wellbeing, independence and readiness for the next stage of education. We want every child to leave the Early Years as a confident, motivated and caring learner who is ready to continue their educational journey.

How Our Intent Is Implemented

- A coherent sequence of learning across Autumn, Spring and Summer, with knowledge and skills revisited, developed and applied.
- High-quality interactions and purposeful talk, with communication and vocabulary explicitly developed across the curriculum.
- A balance of direct teaching, purposeful play and continuous provision, indoors and outdoors.
- Adult modelling, scaffolding and challenge, responsive to children's individual starting points and needs.
- Rich texts, themes and real experiences that develop knowledge, curiosity, cultural capital and a sense of community.
- Targeted approaches and progression documents, including phonics, Mastering Number, Understanding Christianity and Sing Up! Music.
- Ongoing assessment through observation and professional knowledge, enabling staff to identify what children know, understand and can do and plan appropriate next steps.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Playing and exploring	Active learning	Creating and thinking critically
Finding out and exploring; playing with what they know; being willing to 'have a go'.	Being involved and concentrating; keeping trying; enjoying achieving what they set out to do.	Having their own ideas; making links; choosing ways to do things.

Curriculum themes

Autumn	Spring	Summer
Me and my community / The Christmas Story	Traditional Tales / Do dinosaurs make good pets?	Africa – Why do Zebras have stripes? / Plants and change

Curriculum architecture

- Prime and Specific Areas are planned together through meaningful themes, texts, experiences and continuous provision.
- Phonics, Mastering Number, Understanding Christianity and Sing Up! have dedicated progression documents; this overview identifies their place in the long-term sequence.
- Assessment is informed by observation, professional knowledge of children's starting points and ongoing evidence of learning, rather than by a checklist.

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1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Autumn – foundations	Spring – develop and secure	Summer – apply and become independent
Recognise and name basic emotions; talk about feelings with familiar adults. Begin to join shared play and develop confidence in new routines and social situations. Develop understanding of rules, routines and personal care. Begin to make healthy choices with adult guidance.	Recognise their own and others' feelings; begin to manage emotions with support. Develop turn-taking, sharing, cooperation and simple conflict resolution. Follow agreed rules with fewer reminders. Develop independence in dressing, toileting, hygiene and daily routines.	Regulate emotions increasingly independently; show resilience and perseverance. Use language and strategies to resolve minor conflicts and sustain positive relationships. Manage personal needs with increasing independence. Apply understanding of healthy choices and wellbeing in daily life.

2. Physical Development

Autumn – foundations	Spring – develop and secure	Summer – apply and become independent
Build hand and finger strength through varied fine-motor experiences. Explore tools, mark-making and controlled movements. Develop confidence with routines, eating, toileting and moving safely.	Develop strength, coordination, balance and agility. Refine fundamental movement skills and use a range of tools with increasing control. Develop understanding of healthy routines.	Apply movement skills with increasing fluency, confidence and control. Use tools safely and independently; develop stamina and accuracy in early writing movements. Make informed choices that support health and wellbeing.

3. Communication and Language

Autumn – foundations	Spring – develop and secure	Summer – apply and become independent
Develop listening and attention in familiar situations; follow simple and two-part instructions with support. Listen to rhymes, songs and stories and respond to sounds, rhythm and repetition. Use simple social language and begin to share experiences.	Sustain attention for longer and respond appropriately in groups and conversations. Develop familiarity with narrative structure and use new vocabulary in play and discussion. Connect ideas using simple conjunctions and retell familiar stories with support.	Listen attentively across a range of contexts and sustain back-and-forth conversations. Use increasingly well-formed sentences, explanations and newly acquired vocabulary. Retell stories confidently, using key events and language in their own words.

4. Literacy

Phonics: see the school's separate phonics progression document.

Autumn – foundations	Spring – develop and secure	Summer – apply and become independent
Develop enjoyment of books and understand that print carries meaning. Explore rhyme, syllables, initial sounds and letter knowledge through phonics and texts. Make purposeful marks and begin to write their name.	Develop blending and reading of words consistent with phonics knowledge. Retell familiar stories and use vocabulary from texts. Form recognisable letters and write simple words/phrases using known sound–letter correspondences.	Read simple phrases and books matched to phonic knowledge with increasing fluency and comprehension. Retell and discuss texts independently, using new vocabulary. Write recognisable letters and simple phrases/sentences that communicate meaning.

5. Mathematics

Mathematics: see the school's separate Mastering Number progression document.

Autumn – foundations	Spring – develop and secure	Summer – apply and become independent
Develop secure early number sense through Mastering Number. Subitise small quantities; count with one-to-one correspondence and understand cardinality. Explore comparison, shape, measure, patterns and positional language.	Develop fluency with numbers to 10 and understanding of composition. Explore number relationships, subitising, bonds, comparison and early reasoning. Extend pattern, shape, measure and spatial reasoning.	Apply secure number knowledge to solve simple problems and reason mathematically. Consolidate fluency within 10; explore practical addition and subtraction and move between concrete, pictorial and verbal representations. Recognise, describe and create increasingly complex patterns.

6. Understanding the World

Autumn – foundations	Spring – develop and secure	Summer – apply and become independent
Develop knowledge of self, family and community; explore personal history and past/present. Explore diversity in beliefs, celebrations and communities. Use Forest School and sensory experiences to observe the natural world and seasonal change.	Compare people, places, stories and experiences from past and present. Develop geographical vocabulary and awareness of different communities and places. Investigate plants, animals, materials and simple natural processes through observation and hands-on experiences.	Compare life in different places and develop respectful awareness of cultural and religious diversity. Explore contrasting environments, life cycles, change and simple forces. Use observation, discussion and practical enquiry to explain what they notice and recognise change over time.

7. Expressive Arts and Design

Music: see the school's separate Sing Up! progression document.

Autumn – foundations	Spring – develop and secure	Summer – apply and become independent
Explore materials, colour, construction, role play, music and movement. Use objects symbolically and begin to represent ideas and feelings. Explore voice, percussion and musical responses.	Make purposeful choices of materials and joining techniques. Develop imaginative play, storylines and collaborative creativity. Develop musical memory, singing confidence, rhythm, pitch and response to musical features.	Create and communicate ideas with increasing control, intention and independence. Develop detailed drawing, construction and imaginative play; explain choices and outcomes. Create, perform and respond to music, movement and stories with increasing expression.

8. Religious Education, enrichment and curriculum experiences

Understanding Christianity / Worldviews

Autumn	Spring	Summer
UC F2: Incarnation – Why do Christians perform nativity plays at Christmas? Worldviews: What makes places special to different people?	Why are some stories special? Worldviews: How and why do some people care for the world?	UC F3: Salvation – Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden? UC F1: God – Why is the word God so important to us?

Music – Sing Up!

- Autumn: Exploring Music – I’ve Got a Grumpy Face; The Sorcerer’s Apprentice; Witch, Witch; Row, Row, Row Your Boat.
- Spring: Developing Musical Skills – Bird Spotting: Cuckoo Polka; Shake My Sillies Out; Up and Down; Five Fine Bumble Bees.
- Summer: Create, perform and respond; revisit and develop the Reception repertoire through Sing Up! resources.
- Progression across the year: join in and explore → develop accuracy, control and musical awareness → create, perform and respond with increasing independence.
- See the separate Sing Up! progression document for detailed musical objectives.

Enrichment and memorable experiences

- Community and visitors: Salvation Army story sharing; carnival visitor; RSPCA wildlife work; fencing demonstration; external health/physical activity providers.
- Local and wider world: park visit; school senses walk; Museum of Somerset; virtual flight to Africa; Cultural Diversity Day.
- Curriculum-linked experiences: traditional tale character mystery; dinosaur invasion; Noah’s Ark visit; science, plants and growing.
- Parental engagement is used to enrich cultural, community and curriculum experiences.

End of Reception – curriculum outcome

Children leave Reception with secure foundations across the seven areas of learning. They demonstrate increasing independence, confidence, vocabulary, resilience and ability to apply what they know. They are increasingly able to communicate ideas, engage positively with others, read and write in line with their phonic knowledge, reason mathematically, understand their world, create and express ideas, and participate confidently in physical and musical experiences.

Linked documents

- Phonics Progression [St John and St Francis - Phonics & Reading](#)
- Mastering Number progression <https://www.stjohnstfrancisbwmat.org/docs/mastering-number-reception-overview.pdf>
- Understanding Christianity progression [St John and St Francis - Religious Education](#)
- Sing Up! Music progression [St John and St Francis - Music](#)