

# Foundation Stage at Bishops'



The Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to 5 years.

## The Vision (or Intent)

At the Bishops' school we intend to provide and educate all the children in our care with the skills and understanding to be effective learners. We do this through their curiosity, inquisitive nature and love for learning, whilst fostering the 'magical sparkle' young children nurture.

We wish our children to **'Live fully'**, in our school and wider community. **'Laugh often'**, enjoying the fun a school community can bring. **'Learn deeply'**, through a rich and balanced EYFS curriculum. **'Love as God Loves you'**, embracing the strong Christian ethos that is entwined throughout our special and unique school and **'Let your light shine'**, through the wide range of thriving opportunities The Bishops' provide.

Our curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior learning, both from previous settings and their experiences at home. We work in partnership with parents, carers and other settings to provide the best possible start at The Bishops' school, ensuring each individual reaches their full potential from their individual starting points. We recognise that Global Citizenship is a key element and many of our assemblies and the wider environment within our provision supports this.



*'A curriculum for the 21st century will reflect an understanding and acknowledgement of the changing nature of young people as learners and the challenges and demands that will continue to shape their learning in the future. Young people will need a wide and adaptive set of skills to meet the changing expectations of society and to contribute to the creation of a more productive, sustainable and just society.'*  
(ACARA, University of Melbourne. 2009)

Our foundation stage curriculum has been designed to enable children to succeed through cooperative and collaborative learning principles. At the Bishops' school we believe that placing our strong Christian ethos and Global Dimension at the heart of our school gives us our unique curriculum, which prepares children to be kind, compassionate and active citizens in an ever-changing world and become life-long learners. We have a strong emphasis on the Prime Areas of Learning; Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language, including Oracy and Physical Development.

*'Live Fully, Laugh Often, Learn Deeply,  
Love as God Loves You ..... and Let Your Light Shine!'*



At The Bishops' school, we recognise that oracy not only improves academic outcomes, but is a life skill to ensure success beyond school, in life and future employment. Oracy develops children's thinking and understanding, which in turn promotes self-confidence, resilience and empathy which support the child's well-being. Our enabling environments and warm, skilful adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration right from the start.

We believe that high level engagement ensures high level attainment. We therefore provide an engaging curriculum that maximises opportunities for meaningful cross-curricular links and learning experiences, as well as promoting the unique child by offering extended periods of play and sustained thinking. We follow children's interests and ideas to foster a lifelong love of learning both in and outside of school.

By the end of the Reception year, our intent is to ensure that all children make at least good progress from their starting points and are equipped with the skills and knowledge to have a smooth transition into Year 1. We work with families to support children and for those children who enter school at an emerging level we ensure high quality first teaching, keep up sessions and tailored interventions to support better than good progress and the closing of gaps.

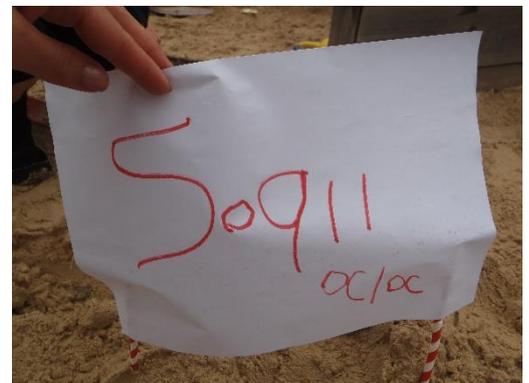
### **How the Foundation Stage curriculum is taught (or implemented)**

Each half term, EYFS staff introduce a new theme to provide awe and wonder and inspiration for learning, whilst providing the flexibility for children to follow their own interests and ideas.

Reception follows the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and work towards the Early Learning Goals.

The 7 areas of learning are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design



Children in EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside. The outdoor area is used all year round and in most weather conditions.

We ensure activities support the Characteristics of Effective Learning to ensure learning takes place.

*'Live Fully, Laugh Often, Learn Deeply,  
Love as God Loves You ..... and Let Your Light Shine!'*

These are:

**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, making links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things

Children learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities. The timetable is carefully structured so that children have directed teaching during the day.

The timetable changes throughout the year to take into consideration the changing needs of the children. These sessions are followed by small focused group work. This means the teacher can systematically check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly and provide real-time verbal feedback which results in a strong impact on the acquisition of new learning.

Children are provided with plenty of time to engage in 'exploration' throughout the variety of experiences carefully planned to engage and challenge them in the provision, inside and outside.

English / Literacy Reading is at the heart of our curriculum and our aim is to encourage a love of reading right from the start. In EYFS we have provided the parents with 'recommended reads plus bronze, silver and gold reading challenges. The aim is to expose children and parents to a wide variety of rich texts that not only develop a love of reading, but have been chosen specifically to develop their oracy, support language pattern understanding, vocabulary and comprehension.

## Phonics



We follow the Essential Letters and Sounds programme this is to ensure consistency across the school. In Nursery and preschools children focus on Phase 1 which concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening. At the Bishops' school we build upon these previously taught skills and foundations to move the children's phonic skills and progression further. In Reception the children are taught Phase 2 and onwards from this, where they will develop GPC, segmenting and blending skills to decode words. Children are encouraged to read at home and are listened to regularly in school. They are given books that match their phonic knowledge in order for them to apply their learning with the aim of becoming successful, confident and fluent readers.

## Mathematics

In Reception, we follow the White Rose Maths Scheme of work which is divided into 3 weekly units. High quality learning environments and meaningful interactions with adults, support children in developing mathematical thinking and discussion.

*'Live Fully, Laugh Often, Learn Deeply,  
Love as God Loves You ..... and Let Your Light Shine!'*

Pupils learn through games and tasks using concrete manipulatives, pictorial structures and representations. This allows children to rehearse, apply, experiment and gain greater depth to their mathematical knowledge.

### **Wider Curriculum**

Our wider curriculum is taught through the learning areas; '**Understanding of the World**' and 'Expressive Arts and Design.' Within our topics, overarching themes and day to day school days, we support the children on their journey as a Global Citizen. They begin to understand the wider world, understand how their actions can help to local community, and create a safe and cleaner planet, knowing they can make a difference.

At The Bishops' the children are taught weekly music lessons, the Stave House music program alongside many wider opportunities to sing and dance throughout daily school timetable and activities.



### **What is the Impact of all this?**

At The Bishops' school the Foundation Stage team have a thorough understanding of all of the children and their individual needs through prior nursery visits, settling in sessions and 'meeting the parents' sessions.

The Bishops' Baseline: Prior to children starting, staff spend time meeting with each child's parents/carers, previous settings and read previous learning journey's to gain an understanding of the whole child and where they are at. In the summer term we run transition sessions for the children and at the same time parent induction sessions to support smooth transition to school.

During the first half term in Reception, all staff use ongoing assessments, observations and conversations with the child to develop a baseline assessment. This identifies each individual's starting points in all areas so we can plan experiences to ensure progress.



The following baseline assessments are also carried out.

The RBA (Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment) focuses on 'Language, Communication and Literacy' and 'Mathematics.' The purpose of this is to show the progress children make from Reception until the end of KS2.

*'Live Fully, Laugh Often, Learn Deeply,  
Love as God Loves You ..... and Let Your Light Shine!'*

We also undertake the NELI (Nuffield Early Language Intervention). NELI is an evidence-based oral language intervention for children who show weakness in their oral language skills and who are therefore at risk of experiencing difficulty with communication and reading. The assessment informs us if the child is at expected for their age or requires intervention from trained NELI practitioners.

**Ongoing Observation:** All ongoing observations are used to inform weekly planning and identify children's next steps. This formative assessment does not involve prolonged periods of time away from the children and excessive paper work. Practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgements through discussions with other practitioners, photographs and physical examples such as a child's drawing / making. Some observations placed into their 'busy books' and shared with the supporting parents and carers and examples kept in individual files.

**Assessment:** Phonics assessments are carried out using the ELS Essential letters and sounds program. This quickly identifies pupils that are not making expected progress. Our aim is for children to 'keep up' rather than 'catch up' where possible. Assessments are completed three times per year and shared with parents, and there are termly parent consultations. We operate an open door policy and meet with parents regularly to support the needs of individuals.

In Summer Term 2, the EYFSP is completed where teacher judge whether the child has met each of the 17 ELG's. They will be assessed as either 'emerging' or 'expected.' At the end of the year the teachers will provide a written report for both parents and will have in depth conversations with the year 1 teachers and staff.



The impact is also evident through our successful transitions into Year 1. The children leave the EYFS stage with the skills, knowledge and confidence to continue their journey as scientists, Global Citizens, historians, artists and geographers.



*'Live Fully, Laugh Often, Learn Deeply,  
Love as God Loves You ..... and Let Your Light Shine!'*