EYFS at St Gregory's

Intent

Purpose

At St Gregory's, the curriculum our children experience enables us to live out our Mission Slogan: ***Loving all, like Jesus, we flourish together***. We aim to enable ***all*** of our children to ***flourish***, regardless of background or disposition by offering a rich and informed curriculum packed with opportunities for all our children to experience 'life to the full' (John 10:10).

Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. At St Gregory's, therefore, we do everything we can to enable children to have the very best start possible to their schooling journey.

The overarching aim of the Early Years Policy at St Gregory's is to promote the principles of the EYFS Statutory Framework. This statutory document states the requirements for schools to support children's learning, development, safeguarding and welfare. It also makes it mandatory for practitioners to use the Characteristics of Effective Learning to show how children learn (playing and exploring; active learning; creative and critical thinking).

In keeping with the rest of the curriculum at our school, the learning our children undertake in EYFS enables them to continuously develop the Seven Skills of the Steward – attributes and attitudes which we believe will be essential so as to enable our children to thrive in the world of the future and help make 'Thy Kingdom come':

Team-working † Problem-solving † Creativity † Peace-making

Empathy † Resilience † Gratitude

Aims

At St Gregory's, in age and stage-appropriate ways, we ensure that all pupils:

- experience an EYFS curriculum which is **meaningful, motivating and memorable**
- experience purposeful experiences within their learning
- become inquisitive, independent, resilient learners who model the skills of the steward in all that they do
- have access to a vocabulary-rich environment
- develop a love of reading and writing right from the start.

Implementation

Curriculum Design

Our curriculum is designed for all children to be successful. We have taken into consideration the seven areas of learning and development:

The **prime areas:**

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

The **specific areas:**

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and designs

When planning, we ensure the curriculum is well-sequenced and progressive throughout the year. We have taken into consideration the four guiding principles that shape practice in our early year's setting:

1. Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.

2. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

3. Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

4. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

We have a long term plan which has three overarching themes per year. Alongside this we have developed half-termly medium term knowledge organisers which are informed by the interests of the children and which outline our core skills and texts etc for that topic.

Enrichment

We enrich the EYFS curriculum in a number of ways, such as:

- Stay and play sessions
- Stay and read mornings
- Regular visitors linked to topics/ interests

- Half termly trips and visits
- Library visits
- Whole school enrichment theme days
- Multi-faith links – visits/visitors
- Termly visits from a local dentist

Curriculum Coverage, Review and Assessment

The curriculum is reviewed continually, with developments based on monitoring conducted throughout the year. A curriculum map is in place, providing skills and coverage for each subject area. This enables the relevant subject leader to sequence a coherent curriculum in that area from Reception all the way up to Y6.

Assessment takes place in a variety of ways in the EYFS. We start with our own baseline assessment alongside the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment. From our baseline we develop our environment and curriculum based on the needs of all children. We use Itrack and Classroom Dojo as a communication and assessment tool between practitioners and parents. From this we make our judgements and plan next steps for all children. This enables us to make sure the children are motivated and challenged. In the final term of the year we complete the EYFS Profile for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities; their attainment against expected levels; and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile must reflect practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher - parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Progress is measured and reported termly to all relevant stakeholders, with Pupil Progress Meetings helping to celebrate success for individuals and groups and also identify areas for interventions going forward.

Subject Knowledge and the Monitoring Cycle

At St Gregory's, we ensure that the teacher and subject leader expertise is suitably strong so as to successfully support the intentions of the EYFS across the school. Specific time is also allocated to EYFS during Governors meetings, SLT meetings and staff meetings in order to ensure all of our staff and governors are knowledgeable about the EYFS. The monitoring of the EYFS takes place on a regular basis and subject leaders ensure that they are proactive in promoting their curriculum area within the EYFS.

Inclusion

In keeping with our intention to enable all our children to flourish, the curriculum for EYFS provides challenge for all groups of children, such as SEND, more able, pupil premium and EAL. This is done through a wide variety of differentiated approaches ranging from in-class support, targeted questioning, use of specific tools / interventions, tailored next steps and enrichment activities.

We value the diversity of individuals within our school and do not discriminate against children regardless of background or disposition. All children and their families at St Gregory's are welcomed into our school, valued and treated equitably regardless of race, religion or ability. In our school we

believe that all our children matter and we give all our children every opportunity to achieve their best at all times. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Safeguarding

At St. Gregory's we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025. We understand that we are required to:

- Ensure that our recruitment procedures include obtaining at least two written references for all new staff who will work with children in the Early Years provision, and that suitability checks (as required by the EYFS) are completed.
- Ensure safe toileting and nappy-changing which reflect the updated privacy and safeguarding balance. (See Intimate Care Policy).
- Ensure that staff receive safeguarding training that meets the criteria set out in the EYFS annex.
- We will maintain enhanced emergency contact information for every child and follow up any prolonged unexplained absence in line with the framework's requirements.
- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

For further details, please also see our schools safeguarding policy: https://www.stgregorysps.co.uk/safeguarding/

Nutrition and mealtimes

We take account of the new EYFS nutrition guidance when planning meals/snacks for children in the Reception / Early Years provision, and ensure that during mealtimes children are appropriately supervised and adult support is in place to ensure safe eating practices.

Staff qualifications / Experience Based Route (EBR)

Where applicable, the school will ensure that any staff counted in ratios at Level 3 have either an approved Level 3 qualification or have undergone the Experience-Based Route and met the other relevant requirements as set out in the EYFS framework.

Supervision

All staff working within the EYFS are subject to supervision meetings half termly with the EYFS Leader. More frequent meetings are arranged with staff members who may require increased support where necessary (or are conducted by outside agencies dependant on need).

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We do this through:

- Induction meetings
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during 'Come and Join in' afternoons.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents.

Role of Subject Leader

The role of the EYFS subject leader is:

- To take the lead in the policy development and the production of schemes of work to ensure progression and continuity in teaching.
- To support colleagues in the development of their planning and assessment.
- To monitor, evaluate and review the EYFS curriculum throughout the school and advise the senior management team of action needed.
- To take responsibility for the purchase and organisation on central resources for EYFS.
- To keep up-to-date with developments in EYFS and share information with colleagues.
- To be responsible for the school portfolio with evidence of EYFS.

Impact

Here at St. Gregory's the impact of our EYFS curriculum is reflected in having well rounded, happy and confident children who transition into year 1 successfully. Our children are set up to succeed in the EYFS to ensure they have a motivating, meaningful and memorable education at St. Gregory's. We measure progress and children's learning across the year through formative and summative assessments, which are based on the teacher's knowledge of the child, floor books, photographs and videos recorded on tapestry. We aim to ensure that children are at least in line with National and Local Authority figures for children achieving a Good Level of Development. Typically we would expect to see that almost all our children make more than the expected steps of progress from their relative starting points. The impact of the EYFS is regularly reviewed (for example, at termly Pupil Progress Meetings and Full Governors Meetings) and our findings are used to inform our EYFS action plan.

If all of the above is effective, we anticipate that our children will be achieving well and experiencing 'life to the full' because of the effective implementation of our Curriculum Intent and Mission Statement:

Loving all, like Jesus, we flourish together.

S Nightingale and C Pritchard November 2025

Review date: July 2026