

St Adrian's Catholic Primary School

Learning and Development in the Foundation Stage



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The Curriculum

“Good practice in assessing children’s understanding enables the team to accurately establish children’s starting points on entry to the school. Staff use this information to continually check that children are making enough progress towards the early learning goals.”

St Adrian’s OFSTED October 2016

The education for your child is based on the ‘Early Years Foundation Stage’ Framework. These are government guidelines that set out the curriculum delivered to each child, from birth until the end of the Reception class. The framework is organised into the seven areas of learning. Our first priority will be to ensure your child is happy and settled in school.

For more information about the Early Years Curriculum, Framework and Assessment, can be found on the following Government page:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf



“Children settle very rapidly and quickly become confident because the systems, routines and expectations in the early years are well defined. Children are encouraged to be independent, helping one another with activities and tasks, and confidently exploring resources.”

St Adrian’s OFSTED October 2016

In the stimulating and caring environment at St. Adrian's, your child will feel confident and able to learn through enjoyable and challenging play.

Play is a very important part of growing up. From birth to five years old, children grow, develop and learn rapidly. They choose their friends and develop their own preferred ways of learning. This involves finding out the answers to questions, developing the confidence to 'have a go' and learning new skills as well as consolidating and extending what has already been discovered.

When your child starts school, they have already learnt a lot from you at home and in pre-school. We want to build on what your child already knows and can do, continually taking them to the next stage.

Children learn many new skills from being involved in purposeful, structured play, both indoors and outdoors. Whilst in the Foundation Stage, your child will spend periods of time involved in activities planned by an adult and periods of time doing activities they have chosen themselves.

This mixture of activities will enable your child to build up important relationships with other children and allow them to use their own initiative and develop problem-solving skills vital as they go further up the school.



Learning at St Adrian's is challenging and fun!

I'm learning as I play

*When I'm building in the block room,
please don't say I'm 'just playing'
for, you see, I'm learning as I play,
about balance, I may be an architect someday.*

*When I'm getting all dressed up,
setting the table, caring for the babies,
don't get the idea that I'm 'just playing'.
I may be a mother or a father someday.*

*When you see me up to my elbows in paint,
or standing at an easel, or moulding and shaping clay,
please don't let me hear you say 'He is just playing'
for, you see, I'm learning as I play,
I just might be a teacher someday.*

*When you see me engrossed in a puzzle or some playing at my school,
please don't feel the time is wasted in play,
for you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to solve problems and concentrate.
I may be in business someday.*

*When you see me cooking or tasting foods,
please don't think that because I enjoy it, it is 'just play'
I'm learning to follow directions and see the differences
I will need to be a cook someday.*

*When you see me learning to skip, hop, run and move my body,
please don't say that I'm 'just playing',
for you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning how my body works,
I may be a doctor, nurse or athlete someday.*

*When you ask me what I've done at school today,
and I say that 'I've just played'
please don't misunderstand me,
for, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to enjoy and be successful in my work.
I'm preparing for tomorrow.
Today, I am a child and my work is play.*

The Learning Environment

The indoor and outdoor 'classrooms' are arranged to give children plenty of space to move around, to work individually and in groups, large and small.

Resources are well organised and labelled so that children know where to find what they need and can be independent in their play (and tidying!). This means that adults can spend more time joining in with children's learning.

Through this supported play, children can explore, develop and use their curiosity and imagination to help them make sense of the world in a secure environment. They learn skills, build up ideas and concepts, think creatively and imaginatively and communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Let's find out more about those Seven Areas of Learning

Each of the following learning areas has early learning goals that provide individualized learning and care that enhances the development of every child, to give them the best possible start in life.

There are many ways in which you can support your child's learning and we will suggest fun activities to do at home throughout your child's time in Foundation Stage. We are sure that you will be doing many activities at home already. However, we also provide new parents with two leaflets which outline some brief 'top tips' from Hertfordshire for Learning:



- Getting ready for school
- I am starting school

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children's personal, social and emotional development is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Nursery and Reception classes provide a secure environment for children to develop as confident individuals. Opportunities are provided for each child to become a valued member of a group and community so that confidence and self-esteem are promoted. Children are encouraged to work and play cooperatively and establish effective relationships with other children and adults. They have many opportunities to demonstrate their independence and seek help where needed, developing an understanding of what is right, what is wrong and why. The other six areas of learning are underpinned by secure personal, social and emotional development.



Communication and Language

We provide a stimulating environment in which the children can listen and respond to stories, non-fiction writing, songs, nursery rhymes and poems and take part in role-play with confidence. The children love to discuss the text, retell stories through small world activities and make up stories of their own. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the school day in a language rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively.



Physical Development

Physical development in the Foundation Stage at St. Adrian's is about providing opportunities for children to develop confidence and improve their skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement both indoors and outside. Physical activity is vital in children's all around development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, coordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well being. Fine motor control and precision helps with eye-hand coordination, which is later linked to early literacy and writing.



Literacy

Comprehension

Language comprehension (both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and nonfiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together.

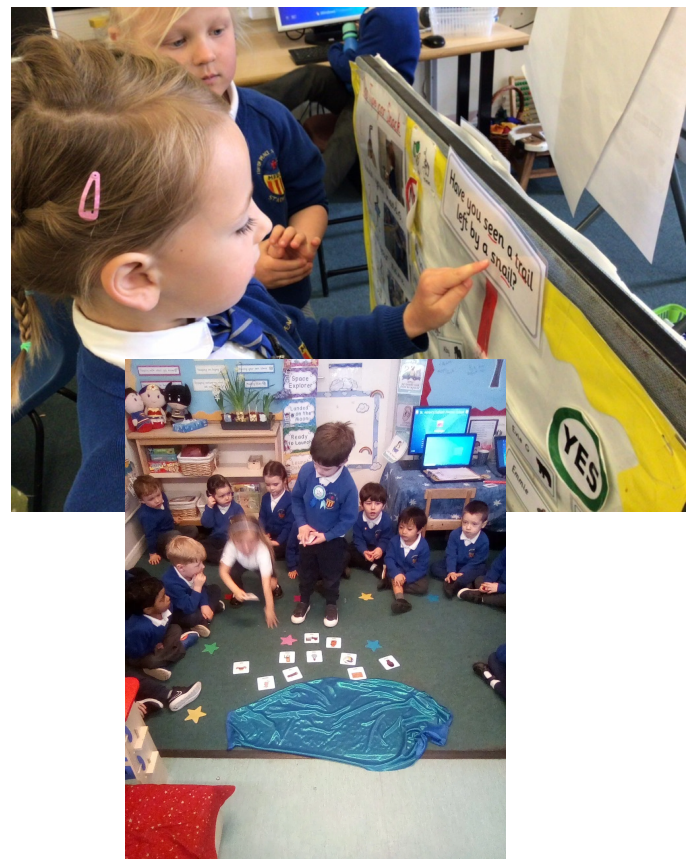
The children will learn comprehension skills alongside learning to decode the words on the page. This will help them to make sense of what the words say and what the text means. Together these skills will help your child on their way to becoming a keen and confident reader.

Word Reading

The children will learn about rhyming words, listen for sounds in words, recognise letters and use these to blend words. They will be introduced to letters through the Letters and Sounds scheme and develop a love for books from the school reading scheme as well as from the class library.

Children enjoy words and language. They love to sing rhymes and share books with others. Parents have a strong and positive influence on their child's reading. Research shows that enjoying books with a child for even a few minutes a day can make a measurable difference in the acquisition of basic reading skills.

Once the children are settled into school and, providing it is ok for us to gather again in light of the recent COVID-19 crisis, we will begin our shared parent mornings. On Monday and Friday mornings both class doors open early for parent shared reading time.



Writing

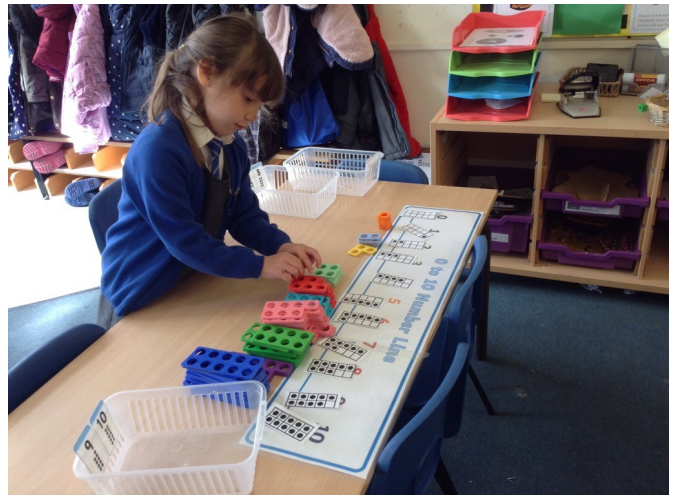
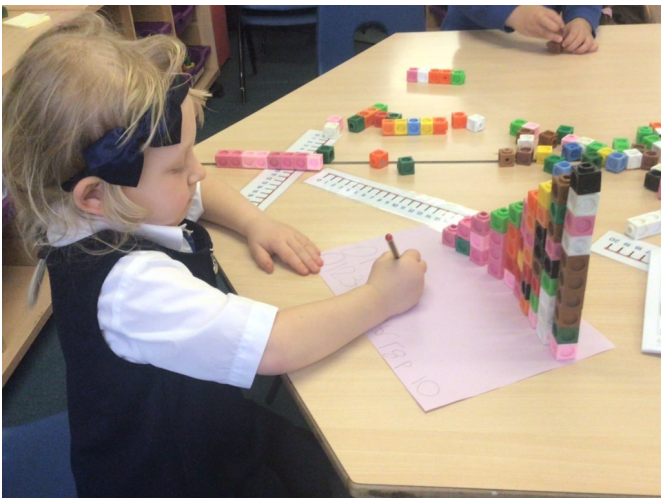
Children will be encouraged to make marks and use pictures, symbols, letters and familiar words to communicate meaning. They will experience a wide range of writing tools and will be encouraged to hold them carefully and form letters correctly in the Reception class.



Children need to develop good small muscle manipulative skills in their hands and fingers before they can form letters.

Mathematics

Through practical activities the children will be encouraged to sort and match objects by colour, size and shape, and to recognise, recreate and devise their own patterns. They will experience counting games and activities, number rhymes, songs and stories. They will begin to use mathematical understanding to solve practical problems. Our curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics. We believe that it is very important for the children to develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, and spot connections.



Understanding the World

In this area of learning, children are developing the crucial skills of knowledge and understanding that help them to make sense of their physical world and their community. They are encouraged to solve problems and find out about the world around them through using their five senses of sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing. This forms the foundation for later work in science, design and technology, history, geography, and computing.



Expressive Arts and Design

Creativity is fundamental to successful learning. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding. We provide a huge range of practical activities that promote creativity through art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative play. The frequency, repetition and depth of children's experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond and observe.



Religious education

In the foundation stage religious education drives the whole curriculum. Through engaging, practical, integrated activities, children can learn more about themselves, other people and the world around them and develop their religious knowledge, skills and understanding. Religious education makes an active contribution to the areas of learning outlined in the curriculum for foundation phase but has a particular and important contribution to: personal and social development, communication and language, literacy, understanding of the world, art and design.



