



Bishop Martin CE Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Handbook

(Updated September 2025)

Learning Together, in God's Love

At Bishop Martin, we INSPIRE and empower all members of our school community, providing the knowledge to enable everyone to thrive and flourish. Guided by our Christian Values, we are all determined to serve and lead the diverse world we live in treating everyone with compassion, dignity and respect. Hope and aspiration support all to grow and believe that

"...with God all things are possible."

Matthew 19:26

Our Christian Values

Christian Values Year 1	Thankfulness	Trust	Perseverance	Justice	Service	Truthfulness
Christian Values Year 2	Generosity	Compassion	Courage	Forgiveness	Friendship	Respect

Bishop Martin CE Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Handbook

At Bishop Martin CE Primary School, our Early Years provision is one Reception Class. We are committed to providing a high-quality Early Years education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers the development of children from birth to the end of their Reception Year. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. This handbook is to support consistency in terms of the Learning and Teaching of the EYFS in our Foundation Stage.

Intent

- We have high ambitions for all children and provide a curriculum that meets the needs of each child, so all children from every background will do well and no child gets left behind
- At the Bishop Martin, we focus on the development of every child as an individual, valuing and building on their previous experiences and responding to their individual needs
- The curriculum is well planned and well sequenced, building on from what children can do and they already know, so they can acquire new skills and knowledge
- At Bishop Martin, we aim to provide a happy, caring, secure and stimulating learning environment to support and extend children's development and learning
- We foster good relationships with families, where they feel valued and are able to actively contribute to and participate in school life
- We encourage confidence, independence and a desire to learn;
- We promote and celebrate achievement across all areas of the EYFS curriculum ensuring every child is included and supported

Implementation

We follow the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings. At Bishop Martin CE Primary we recognise that;

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships

- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

Children learn skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate their understanding through the seven areas of learning and development.

Children should mostly develop the three prime areas first. These are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

These prime areas are those most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in four specific areas. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Communication and Language

This covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundations for literacy skills.

Children's developing competence in speaking and listening is focused on. We aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role-play and group discussions.

Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as working with puppets, saying rhymes and singing songs together.

We aim to provide meaningful contexts for communication and language in EYFS, following the URLEY Approach that supports and develops children's oral language and communication skills and encourage them to be resilient and independent learners. We use the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-3) to develop enabling environments in our indoor and outdoor provision with high quality communication & language interactions, encouraging sustained shared thinking.

Children are highly encouraged and motivated to take part in creating their own fantastic stories using Tales Toolkit, their imagination and talking about the characters, setting, problem and solution of their stories. We encourage children to respect and celebrate diversity and support them in developing rich communication and language skills by understanding other cultures and beliefs through first hand experiences, books, celebrating festivals.

Physical Development

Children are given the opportunities to move to music, use equipment, develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills. They develop an increasing understanding of how their body works and what they need to do to keep themselves healthy. This is done both indoors and outdoors.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are supported to learn to work together, share, take turns and co-operate with others. Using stories, circle times and through conversation, children are supported with recognising, naming and regulating their emotions.

Children are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. Staff support children to develop the characteristics of effective learning, so children become resilient and persevere when they encounter challenges.

Children are also encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and to respect other cultures and beliefs. Children are enabled to become more confident and develop a positive self-image.

Literacy

We encourage children to treat books and other resources with respect. The children will experience a wide range of stories, books (fiction and non-fiction), rhymes and poetry. They are encouraged to use the mark-making equipment in all the different areas of the learning environments independently and take part in teacher-led activities. These activities include whole class shared reading and writing, phonics sessions and small group guided reading and writing activities.

In Reception we follow the Read to Write Scheme of work to support the children's literacy development. All literacy work is based around 'vehicle text', that is of high quality. The units of work centre on engaging, vocabulary-rich texts that support a wide range of writing opportunities. Many of the 'vehicle texts' used, also have strong thematic links to the other areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Phonics

At Bishop Martin CE Primary we aim to:

- To ensure the delivery of phonics is of high quality and is systematic
- To ensure there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics in a discrete session
- To give all children the most enriching phonics sessions allowing them to apply their phonic knowledge to both reading and writing
- To have opportunities to apply the skills they have learned throughout the day and in a rich learning environment
- To differentiate the teaching of phonics to enable outstanding progress to be made by all children.

We follow the 'RWI Phonics' programme and the order in which the sounds are taught for Reception Class. The children will work through Sets 1, 2 and 3. All children in Reception are split into ability groups for phonic sessions.

Mathematics

All children are supported to develop their mathematical skills and language through mathematically rich learning environments, real life contexts, rhyme and stories. Children are provided with meaningful contexts for mathematics in EYFS, following long term plans and children's interests.

We aim to enhance fluency in maths in Reception by following a the 'Number of the Week' Mastery approach. We aim that children will therefore be able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills independently using a range of resources.

Understanding the World

All children are encouraged to become independent learners, exploring and investigating to solve problems and misconceptions. Children are provided, through both adult led and continuous provision enhancements, with relevant and purposeful opportunities to explore the world around them. Children are encouraged to independently explore, to solve problems, to investigate, to make decisions and experiment. They will learn about living things, their environment, the world, history and the people who are important in their lives. All children are exposed to the wider world around them including different cultures, foods, religion, languages and ways of life. Children are exposed to a wide variety of first-hand experiences to ensure children are immersed in their learning.

Expressive Arts and Design

Children will explore expressive arts and design through our early years foundation stage across three strands: natural materials recreated, creative design and imaginative role play. Children will explore these areas of the curriculum by using a range of materials, tools and techniques using their imagination and creativity, and by experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. Opportunities to do this are provided through art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design, in which children represent their unique thoughts, ideas and feelings.

Impact

We strive to ensure that our children's progress during their time in EYFS is the best it can be. We want all children to become competent lifelong learners, regardless of their backgrounds and starting points and develop good communication and language skills. All children in our EYFS experience smooth transitions, whether they join us in 2-3 Room, Nursery, Reception and beyond. We regularly assess children's progress throughout the year (See EYFS Assessment Handbook). Staff use observations to make formative assessments, which quickly inform planning and next steps for children in their learning. We also use Development Matters as a guide to support our summative assessments of children and we use this information to put into place action plans to support all children's learning.

The impact of our curriculum is also measured by how effectively it supports our children to develop into well rounded individuals.

Planning

To support children's learning we follow a Long Term plan and the children's interests. We also use 'In the moment planning' to ensure that we are focusing on children's next stages of learning and enhancing the provision to support their learning needs and interests. When planning, practitioners reflect on the Three Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- *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, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things

The Learning Environment

The EYFS learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The environment is set up in learning areas, where children are easily able to find clearly labelled equipment and resources they need. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

Activities are planned for both inside and outside with children having the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the school day. The learning environment is divided into a variety of different areas, including designated areas for writing, mathematics, art and craft, role play, physical activity, construction, small world and play dough area as well as book corner, sand and water. These areas are carefully arranged to encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the learning environment.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage has a secure outdoor area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for children to do things in different ways and on different scales. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active

Inclusion

We believe that all children are entitled to an education which meets their individual needs and inclusivity underpins our practices. We believe that all children are entitled to a curriculum which focuses on quality first teaching and which is differentiated to meet the individual needs of all children. (Please see Inclusion and SEND Policy)

Children's Welfare

At Bishop Martin CE Primary, our Safeguarding statement is:

'Our school is committed to safeguarding children and promoting children's welfare and expects all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe

environment. Everyone has a responsibility to act without delay to protect children by reporting anything that might suggest a child is being abused or neglected. It is our willingness to work safely and challenge inappropriate behaviours that underpins this commitment. The school seeks to work in partnership with families and other agencies to improve the outcomes for children who are vulnerable or in need.'

'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.' (DFE 2016)

(Please see Child Protection Policy)

Parents as Partners

We appreciate that parents are children's first educators and we value the contribution they make.

We understand the role that parents have played and their future role in educating their child. We do this through:

- Providing all families with a Home Visit so we can talk to parents about their child before their child starts our school;
- We provide all children with a series of visits to our school so children have the opportunity to spend time with their peers and adults before starting school;
- Inviting all parents to parents evenings to talk about their child's progress;
- Providing parents with log in codes so they can view their child's Learning Journey at home and upload observations about their child onto their child's Learning Journey;
- We arrange a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Stay and Plays, workshops and Sports Day.