

# Curriculum Overview for EYFS

## Intent:

At St Erth School, we believe that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is vital to ensure children develop a love of learning, gain the building blocks to be able to learn and nurture the understanding of how to form relationships with others. We believe in giving the children the best possible start which is why we have Reception as a single year group to enable the children to have valuable time with adults who can spend valuable time with individuals and explore the learning styles and personalities of each unique child. The EYFS framework for the early years foundation stage offers the four guiding principles that shapes practitioners' work, these are:

- A unique child: Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- 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;
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

## EYFS curriculum aims:

The early years foundation stage guidelines aim to provide:

- Quality and consistency in all early years classes;
- A secure foundation through learning opportunities tailored to the needs of pupils of this age group;
- Partnership working between parents and practitioners;
- Equality of opportunity to support children of all backgrounds

There are 10 areas of safeguarding and wellbeing that childcare providers must follow which we ensure are followed at all times at St Erth:

- Child protection
- Suitable people
- Staff qualifications, training, support and skills
- Key person (Class Teacher and Teaching Assistant)
- Staff-child ratios
- Health
- Managing behaviour
- Safety and suitability of premises, environment, and equipment

- Special educational needs
- Information and records

At St Erth, we have ensured that these guiding principles, aims and areas of safeguarding, underpin all we do in EYFS. Alongside this, the seven areas of learning and development (ELGs) supported by Development Matters are the foundations of our EYFS curriculum.

The seven areas of learning and development:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)
- Communication and Language (C+L)
- Physical Development (PD)
- Literacy (L)
- Mathematics (M)
- Understanding the World (UTW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

We intend for all individuals in EYFS to develop a love for learning and grasp the skills to be ready to learn to enable them to further embark on their learning journey throughout the school. The Early Learning Goals are our taught through Development Matters principles. We ensure our children feel safe, happy and challenged to think critically about how things work but also, how people behave to enable them to make informed decisions about their learning and behaviour.

## Implementation:

Each of the EYFS seven areas of learning and development have specific areas within. At St Erth, we use these areas to inform our planning and teaching in EYFS to ensure the children have every opportunity to fulfil their potential. Through structured and unstructured activities, individuals learn in a rich environment to enable them to develop in each area of learning in a way that suits the individual and group needs. The yearly plan for EYFS at St Erth outlines the key topic areas and subject-specific areas alongside the whole-school's curriculum. These have been carefully matched to the Development Matters statements. Topics are then planned in more detail providing focused teaching and continuous provision activities to engage the children and spark their interest to 'explore.' Adults in the classroom ask pertinent questions that will lead the children's learning forward and spark imaginations and revelations.

Adults are well-trained and allowed time to get to know individuals so the best-possible provision can be put in place for the children. Through transition from pre-school to school, the children are already known to adults and aware of their environments prior to starting the Reception year and parents have also had opportunities to discuss any areas of concern or pass on any observations. We have close links to the previous learning providers for pupils coming to St Erth to ensure the transition is smooth.

Adults continuously reflect on their practise and adapt planning to ensure the learning is relevant to the individual children. They also have the confidence to embrace the day – for example, if it's snowing then this will be celebrated and explored.

**1. Personal, social and emotional development (PSED)** focusses on children's mental and physical wellbeing. Children work on long-term skills and awareness to build a healthy foundation they can take forward. It's divided into these topics:

- Self-regulation
- Managing self
- Building relationships

Personal, social and emotional development (PSED) provides children with lots of social opportunities. Children can learn to form healthy bonds and make stable, lasting friendships. For example, they'll learn what the right and wrong things to do are, alongside respect, compassion, morals, and lots more socio-emotional skills.

The subject also opens children up to discuss their thoughts and feelings. This can help them to form a level of ownership, independence, and self-esteem. At St Erth, we engage with PSED though role play, stories, circle time, PSHE and through continuous provision allowing children to explore their feelings and emotions in a safe environment and then following up with adult discussions and reflection.

**2. Communication and language (C+L)** encourages conversations and spoken language skills. Underpinning all skills, it's foundational for children to be able to interact with their peers and their learning environment. It's split into the following distinct areas:

- Listening, attention and understanding
- Speaking

There's a lot more to language development and communication than simply 'talking'. It refers to the variety of ways that children take in and communicate information. Only a part of this is used with spoken words.

Words and image association is one of the best forms of initiating language and communication development. This is why reading books to young children is a great way of bringing this out, since they'll be able to make a connection with the pictures in the book and the text you're reading out. Stories and reading is held at utmost priority with a non-negotiable agreement that there will '5 a day' of books and stories being shared with the children. Phonics and early reading underpins all we do in EYFS at St Erth and the stories shared in guided reading and storytime, offer many opportunities to develop communication and language skills. As part of our phonics scheme, the children sing a nursery rhyme or song daily which also has huge benefits to speech, language, speaking and listening. Staff are also trained in how to use music and song to develop speech and language to support children.

**3. Physical development (PD)** is vital for healthy lives, as well as affecting other areas of learning. Both gross and fine motor skills are developed over early years in activities like writing and cutting. Practitioners plan by looking at these specific areas:

- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills

As children move around, they're exploring the world around them through handling objects. If children are exposed to healthy eating and leading an active lifestyle, they're likely to continue those positive habits as time goes on.

By children having regular physical activity in their lives, it'll promote healthy development, growth, composition, and cardiovascular fitness. Physical development activities help children to control and manage their body movements and control. It also improves brain development, such as critical thinking skills and concentration, since physical fitness ensures heightened brain function.

At St Erth, through structured and unstructured (continuous provision) learning, opportunities to develop both fine and gross motor skills are provided. Following early and continuous assessments, the teacher provides activities to develop the skills the children need. Eg. Using tweezers to move objects to develop strength in the hand to aid early writing and using scissors. Using play doh and other sensory tools to develop fine motor skills. Children engage in PE sessions following the schools' 'Real PE' curriculum, as well as continuous provision to develop gross motor skills and an activity is always considered to develop children's gross motor skills in continuous provision.

**4. Literacy (L) skills** will form a strong foundation for children's school careers, and are split simply into:

- Comprehension
- Word reading
- Writing

With literacy, as a part of the EYFS seven areas of learning, children begin to build connections between spoken sounds and the letters in writing. In order to achieve this, they'll need to start forming levels of experience with letters and words, pictures and objects, and sounds.

At St Erth Community Primary School we aim to inspire a love of reading that will continue for years to come. This is approached through meaningful reading experiences inspired by inspirational texts. We encourage and plan for a range of reading experiences so that pupils can apply their reading skills across the curriculum and throughout the day with activities to support phonics carefully planned into the curriculum.

Research has shown that the teaching of systematic, synthetic phonics is the most effective way of teaching young children to read. Reading does not look like reading at first – we need to give children the building blocks to be able to segment and blend the phonemes in a word to be able to decode any word they come across in their lives. By following our own systematic synthetic programme based on Letters and Sounds, incorporating good practise and resources from our experience and adopting an all-encompassing approach with extended learning opportunities, children at St Erth are being offered a quality approach to becoming confident readers.

-see St Erth Reading and Phonics Policy

**5. Mathematics (M)** area of learning focusses on simple concepts that are foundational to higher maths topics in KS1 and up. In EYFS children focus on the maths areas of:

- Number
- Numerical patterns

Learning maths can help with life skills such as spatial awareness, shapes and measurement, and problem-solving. Maths also serves for other uses, such as handling and managing money, telling the time, or working out distance and time together.

The children at St Erth have a daily 'maths' lesson alongside many opportunities to explore number and patterns through continuous provision to support their learning and development. We use the school's curriculum which has been carefully structured to ensure children have a deep understanding of numbers to 10. We also use the NCETM Maths Mastery resources to engage and embed the children's learning of early number.

**6. Understanding the world (UTW)** supports children's learning about the surrounding environment. In this area of learning, children can explore new cultures and better understand basics that we often take for granted.

- Past and present
- People, culture, and communities
- The natural world

Children will discover similarities and differences, what works and what doesn't, what they can and cannot change, and why certain things happen within the world around them. There are lots of opportunities to experiment and investigate. From this subject out of the EYFS seven areas of learning, children can make observations and form their own opinions and theories.

As well as learning about societies and communities, cultures, people, and places, there are elements of science within this type of learning, too. For example, children will learn about the environment, such as weather conditions, plants, and wildlife. At St Erth the children learn in this area through topics. We adopt a topic-based approach and these are carefully considered from the children's interests and ensuring these areas are included. We also follow the School's structure of exploring different continents and adopting specific vocabulary.

**7. Expressive arts and design (EAD)** supports children's creative development and expression. It helps children create their own art work, and encourages them to value their own thoughts, opinions, and skills. The two areas in this area of learning are:

- Creating with materials
- Being imaginative and expressive

Expressive arts is one of the EYFS seven areas of learning, which provides emotive sharing. They'll be using a range of materials and activities in order to express themselves through imaginative play. These activities include design and technology, dance, movement, music, art, and role-play.

Through our topics at ST Erth, the children are encouraged to be creative in many ways: there are craft and art activities taught in a structured way and always opportunities in continuous provision for children to explore their creative natures. Music is high-priority: listening to a range and singing, playing instruments through weekly music sessions, continuous provision and daily nursery rhymes and songs sang to support phonics. We follow the school's Art and DT curriculum which has been linked to the development matters statements to ensure the activities, processes and outcome are appropriate and these are reviewed and adapted to suit the needs of individuals.

## Parental Involvement

Effective relationships between school and parents are key to delivering the best for our pupils, in particular as they start their school journey in EYFS. Central to this is sharing pupil's progress and achievements on a regular basis both at home and in school.

- Parental involvement with Seesaw – our record of learning journeys (see assessment section).
- Parents are invited to Phonics meetings throughout the year to ensure they understand the schools approach to systematic, synthetic phonics and know the ways in which they can support their children at home.
- Parents evening are offered termly as a formal opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss how learning is progressing.
- Parents will receive one formal report at the end of the school year reporting, (June) this covers attainment and progress across the Early years framework.
- The school operate an open door policy and parents are encouraged to share achievements and worries as they arise – class teacher always at the gate in the mornings to greet the children and chat to parents.

## Assessment

Assessments take place on a daily basis in EYFS through the form of observations, rather than formal testing. A child's progress is reviewed between two to three years old, before they start more structured learning, and again at the end of reception before they move on to KS1. The goals and expected development for early years children across the seven areas of learning and development, as well as changes between different ages and stages and these expectations will inform practitioner observations.

Children in early years at St Erth have a learning journey through the school's Seesaw platform. Photographs with captions are uploaded daily and shared with parents. Comments can be made and parents can also share any photos from home as well to celebrate all achievements. These are documents that record observations about the child. EYFS practitioners will observe children as they play to understand the child's current attainment and to plan for their next steps. These observations form the majority of EYFS assessments. We also carry out the Reception Baseline Assessment in the first six weeks of starting school and will report assessments against the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception year. Children are considered 'emerging' or 'expected' within each area and we report this to data to Cornwall County. We also report if children have a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD).

On-going informal assessments take place in phonics (every 4 weeks) and daily against the Development Matters statements to help inform planning and future provision.

## SEND in Early Years at St Erth

The SEND Code of Practice is a document that is designed to help parents, social workers and educational practitioners support children and young people who have SEND to the best of their ability.

There is a specially dedicated document, that looks at the SEND Code of Practice through the lens of early years education. A brief overview of what the SEND code of practice in early years covers:

- Principles of the Code
- Working together across education and health to achieve join outcomes

- The Local Offer
- How to improve outcomes
- SEN in Early Years
- SEN Support in Early Years
- Preparing for adult life even from the earliest years
- Support and assessment plans

If a child is diagnosed with SEND before or during the early years, planning and implementing support plans as early as possible is really important. At St Erth we have regular discussions with the SENDCO who will carry out observations if required. Key information about a child can be recording using CPOMS or if a child is showing clear signs of SEN, a provision map will be created for them alongside their parents. This holds specific target for that child and details how they are supported in school. Interventions we use include our school phonics scheme, NELI and fun fit.

## Impact:

The impact of the very carefully considered curriculum and implementation of this, is that children are engaged, involved and happy. They have the desire to learn, they thrive on picking up new skills and learning new concepts in a variety of different ways. The School Teaching and Learning policy guides the founding principles of learning that EYFS children are given in preparation for Key Stage One. Through working metacognitively, children take the first steps in becoming independent learners who are confident, aspirational and self-aware. The School values underpin all we do in EYFS and children's personal development throughout their time at St Erth School.

- Aspiration
- Kindness
- Resilience
- Reading
- Respect
- Perseverance
- Knowledge
- Nurture