St Andrew's CE Infants' School

Early Years Foundation Stage

A warm, caring start to school life. We know every child well, and we love helping them grow in confidence, curiosity and kindness.

Welcome to our school family

St Andrew's is a very family-orientated school. When your child joins us, they become part of our family, and we love and care for them as our own. Our small, close community means we get to know each child, and each family, really well.

We know what makes your child laugh, what they are curious about, what worries them and what they are proud of. That knowledge helps us to make every day happy, safe and full of learning.

Our classes

Our Early Years is made up of a Nursery class and two Reception classes.

Robins

Our Nursery class, where children take their first happy steps into school life.

Owls

One of our two Reception classes.

Woodpeckers

Our other Reception class.

Every child is unique

No two children are the same. Each comes to us with their own personality, interests, strengths and ways of learning. Some learn best by doing, some by watching, listening or talking, and many by a mixture of all three.

We celebrate those differences. We take time to listen, notice what each child is interested in, and plan learning that feels right for them, so that every child feels valued, secure and ready to try new things.

The start of our school values

Our Early Years is the starting point for our school's core values. These are based on six Christian values, and we begin to live them out with our youngest children through stories, play, songs, conversations and the way we treat each other every day.

Friendship	Resilience	Compassion	Thankfulness	Forgiveness	Peace

How we teach

We balance two kinds of learning, so that children get the best of both. Throughout, adults are close by to comfort, encourage, and join in.

Child-initiated play and continuous provision

Children choose activities that interest them and follow their own ideas. Through play they explore, solve problems, try things out and learn to get along with others.

Our classrooms and outdoor areas offer continuous provision. This means that a rich range of inviting resources and activities is always available, so children can return to what they love, build on earlier learning and make their own choices. Adults watch, listen and join in at just the right moment to extend their thinking.

Adult-led focused teaching

Teachers and adults also lead focused sessions to introduce and build on new skills and knowledge. These take place:

- one to one
- in small groups

Working closely like this lets us notice exactly what each child needs next, and give support or challenge at the right moment.

Outdoor and hands-on learning

We value learning outdoors. Being outside gives children space to run, climb, explore and discover, and it is a natural place for talking, imagining and making friends.

Hands-on, practical learning is at the heart of what we do. Children learn by touching, building, making and experimenting, so that ideas become real and memorable.

Our curriculum

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, which sets out how children learn and develop from Nursery to the end of Reception. At the heart of it are three prime areas. These are the foundations for everything else, and they are especially important in the early years.

Personal, social and emotional development

Building confidence, managing feelings and behaviour, making friends and learning to look after themselves.

Communication and language

Listening, talking, understanding and joining in with stories, songs and conversations.

Physical development

Developing strong, confident bodies, from running and climbing to the small hand movements needed for writing.

As children grow in confidence in the prime areas, they also learn through four specific areas: literacy, mathematics, understanding the world, and expressive arts and design.

Early Learning Goals

The Early Learning Goals describe what most children are expected to know and be able to do by the end of Reception. There are goals for each of the seven areas of learning, and they guide our planning so that children are well prepared for Year 1. Our teachers know the children so well that they use ongoing observations of play and learning, as well as adult-led activities, to see how each child is getting on. We

share this with parents and carers, and we celebrate every child's progress.

Personal, social and emotional

- Self-regulation
- Managing self
- Building relationships

Communication and language

- Listening, attention and understanding
- Speaking

Physical development

- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills

Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Number
- Numerical patterns

Understanding the world

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

Expressive arts and design

- Creating with materials
- Being imaginative and expressive

Characteristics of effective learning

The EYFS also describes the characteristics of effective learning. These are about how children learn, not just what they learn, and they help us to see each child as the individual learner they are.

Playing and exploring

Children investigate and experience things, and "have a go".

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to have a go

Active learning

Children concentrate and keep trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically

Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

We would love to tell you more about life in our Early Years. Please contact the school office to find out more or to arrange a visit.