Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership
'Academies in Christ'
Part of the Archdiocese of Southwark

Knowledge-rich, skills-led learning for all
Christ at our heart
Serving everyone in our community
Partnership of love, ambition, joy and peace

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at English Martyrs' RC Primary School

School Mission Statement

At English Martyrs' RC Primary School, rooted in the teachings of scripture and inspired by Christ's love, we strive to create a nurturing and inclusive community where every child is recognised as a unique gift from God. We work in close partnership with parents, acknowledging them as the first educators of their children, to support each child's spiritual, moral, and academic development. We foster a welcoming and safe environment where children are encouraged to grow in faith, show kindness, and develop respect for others, while embracing the richness of diverse cultures within our school community. Guided by our shared values and our motto, we aim to help our pupils become confident, caring individuals who live with integrity and bring light to the world.

Stand firm. Show kindness. Seek excellence. Ubi Caritas

Intent

At English Martyrs' RC Primary School, our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum is designed to foster a love of learning, promote emotional and social development, and build a strong foundation for future academic success. Grounded in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework and Catholic Social Teaching (CST), our EYFS curriculum ensures that every child is given the opportunity to thrive in an environment of care, respect, and support.

We intend to nurture the whole child, taking into account their emotional, social, cognitive, spiritual, and physical development. Our curriculum is designed to develop the key areas of learning and development as outlined in the EYFS framework, while also embedding Catholic values that promote the dignity and worth of every child, as well as a sense of solidarity, community, and care for creation.

Children begin to develop both substantive knowledge (for example early language, number, and understanding of the world) and disciplinary knowledge (how to explore, question, communicate, and reflect), laying strong foundations for future learning across the curriculum.

By focusing on the principles of respect, kindness, perseverance, honesty, sharing, and courage, we aim to provide a curriculum that supports each child's spiritual, moral, and intellectual development. The intention is for children to not only achieve in their academic learning but also to grow in their ability to form positive relationships, appreciate the beauty of the world, and embrace their role as responsible, caring members of the community.

We also aim to develop children's cultural capital through exposure to a wide range of stories, experiences, environments, and traditions, including those that reflect diverse cultures and backgrounds within our school and wider community.

Implementation

Our approach to delivering the EYFS curriculum at English Martyrs' RC Primary School is child-centred and faith-based, ensuring that all areas of learning are covered in a holistic and engaging way. We provide a stimulating, inclusive, and nurturing environment where children are encouraged to explore, create, and develop independence. Teaching is both child-led and adult-supported, with opportunities for children to learn both inside and outside of the classroom.

Learning is carefully sequenced through a balance of adult-led experiences and continuous provision, ensuring that knowledge and skills build progressively over time. Key curriculum programmes, including Twinkl Phonics, Hamilton Brookes, The Power of Reading, NCETM Mastering Number, Ten:Ten Life to the Full and Lighting the Path, provide coherence, progression and ambitious outcomes across the EYFS curriculum.

Key Elements of the EYFS Curriculum:

1. **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED):**

   We prioritize the development of emotional intelligence and social skills from the outset. Children are encouraged to develop strong relationships with their peers and teachers, learning how to manage their feelings, understand the feelings of others, and engage in positive interactions. Our focus on Catholic values like respect, honesty, kindness, and sharing is integrated into everyday interactions and routines, helping children to understand the importance of relationships based on love and mutual respect.

   Through role play, group activities, and circle time, children develop their social skills, communication, and emotional resilience. We also ensure that children's learning experiences are shaped by the principles of solidarity and the common good, where children are taught to work together, help each other, and care for one another.

   Alongside our daily practice, we deliver Relationships, Sex and Health Education through the Ten:Ten Life to the Full programme, supporting children in developing self-awareness, emotional literacy, healthy relationships and an understanding of their unique value as children of God.

2. **Communication and Language:**

   Developing strong communication skills is central to our curriculum. Children are encouraged to express themselves clearly, listen attentively, and engage in

meaningful conversations. We support this development by providing rich language experiences in both structured and spontaneous activities, whether through storytelling, songs, or interactive play.

We also ensure that our approach reflects the Catholic Social Teaching emphasis on the dignity of the person by providing an inclusive environment where all voices are heard and respected. Additionally, our philosophy of sharing is nurtured through collaborative discussions and group work, encouraging children to listen, speak, and express themselves respectfully.

Children are supported to develop and use a wide range of vocabulary through high-quality interactions, storytelling, and adult modelling.

3. **Physical Development:**

We recognize the importance of physical well-being and its connection to both cognitive and emotional growth. In our EYFS setting, we provide opportunities for children to develop fine and gross motor skills through both structured activities and free play.

We incorporate outdoor learning, allowing children to explore nature and engage in active play. These opportunities are designed to develop children's coordination, control, and physical confidence, with an emphasis on care for creation as they interact with the natural world around them.

Perseverance is also emphasized as children are encouraged to take part in physical challenges and learn to persist, even when tasks seem difficult.

4. **Literacy:**

Literacy development is a key focus, with particular attention given to early reading, writing, speaking and listening. We deliver systematic synthetic phonics through Twinkl Phonics, ensuring children develop the foundational knowledge and skills required for successful reading and writing. High-quality texts form the backbone of our literacy curriculum through The Power of Reading and Hamilton Brookes, which provide rich opportunities for language development, vocabulary acquisition, comprehension and purposeful writing.

Children develop a love of reading through daily story sessions, shared reading and exposure to a wide range of high-quality children's literature. Stories from the Catholic faith are incorporated regularly to deepen children’s understanding of religious values and teachings. The Ten:Ten resources are used to introduce children to stories of faith, compassion, and kindness, in line with the Catholic Social Teaching emphasis on nurturing children’s spiritual lives.

As children develop their literacy skills, they are encouraged to communicate their ideas, experiences and imagination through mark making, writing and storytelling.

5. **Mathematics:**

   We foster a love of mathematics by providing practical, engaging and meaningful opportunities for children to explore number, pattern, shape, measure and problem-solving. Our curriculum is supported by the NCETM Mastering Number Programme, which develops children's understanding of number sense, subitising, counting, composition of number and mathematical relationships. Through carefully planned adult-led teaching and continuous provision, children build deep conceptual understanding and confidence in mathematics. Collaborative mathematical activities encourage children to explain their thinking, share ideas and develop perseverance when solving problems.

   Kindness and sharing are reinforced through group work where children collaboratively solve problems and share their findings. These activities promote a sense of community and allow children to practice respecting others' ideas and contributions.

6. **Understanding the World:**

   We encourage curiosity and exploration, helping children understand the world around them—both their immediate environment and the wider world. Our curriculum is designed to help children explore people and communities, the world around them, and the past and present.

   Through local walks in Rochester, cultural exploration, and the study of Catholic values, children learn about the importance of solidarity and care for creation, understanding how their actions affect the world around them. Topics such as environmental care, respect for all people, and family life are explored through interactive learning experiences.

   In Key Stage 1, children are encouraged to develop an awareness of historical and cultural diversity, reflecting on how their own experiences are shaped by history, community, and family life.

   Experiences are chosen to reflect a diverse range of cultures, traditions, and perspectives, helping children develop respect and understanding for others.

7. **Expressive Arts and Design:**

   Creativity and self-expression are at the heart of our curriculum. Through arts, crafts, role play, and music, children develop their imagination and creativity, exploring different materials, textures, and ideas.

Courage and perseverance are cultivated as children experiment with their own ideas and take creative risks. Collaborative art projects encourage children to work together and express their shared vision, reinforcing the importance of sharing and respect for others' work.

Faith and Spiritual Development:

At English Martyrs' RC Primary School, we place a strong emphasis on spiritual development through a Catholic lens. Our EYFS curriculum is deeply rooted in Catholic values, and we aim to provide children with a foundation of faith and understanding of the teachings of the Church. Religious Education is delivered through the Lighting the Path Religious Education Directory programme, enabling children to encounter, know and understand the teachings of the Catholic faith in an age-appropriate and engaging way.

Prayers, Bible stories, and liturgical celebrations are integral to our daily routines. Children learn about Jesus' teachings on love, compassion, and care for others, and these principles guide their understanding of their role in the community and the world.

We incorporate Catholic Social Teaching principles by encouraging children to reflect on their role as stewards of the world and caretakers of others, fostering an early sense of solidarity and love for the common good.

Impact

The impact of our EYFS curriculum is measured in the following ways:

1. **Holistic Development:**

   Children will develop in all areas of the EYFS framework: personal, social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and spiritual development. They will demonstrate positive relationships, emotional regulation, curiosity, and a love of learning.

2. **Confidence and Independence:**

   Children will grow in self-confidence and independence, displaying the ability to make choices, explore, and engage in their learning. They will show perseverance when faced with challenges and will develop the skills needed to collaborate and share ideas with others.

3. **Catholic Values and Social Responsibility:**

   Pupils will show respect for themselves, others, and the world around them. They will begin to understand their role in building a just, loving, and caring society, following the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. Children will demonstrate

qualities such as kindness, respect, courage, and solidarity, which will be evident in their relationships and interactions.

4. **Strong Foundations for Future Learning:**

   Children will develop a solid foundation for future learning in all subject areas. They will be well-prepared to transition into Key Stage 1, having developed essential skills in communication, problem-solving, and collaboration, as well as a love of learning and a sense of responsibility for their actions.

5. **Positive Relationship with Faith:**

   Children will develop a positive relationship with Catholic faith and values, learning to live out the principles of love, service, and care for creation in their everyday lives. They will grow in spiritual awareness, and this will form the basis for their ongoing religious education and participation in the Catholic community.

6. **Cultural Awareness and Wider Understanding:**

   Children will demonstrate an awareness of the world beyond their immediate environment, including different cultures and communities. This contributes to their cultural capital and supports their readiness for future learning.