

Sunflowers at St Anne's Curriculum Statement

At Sunflowers at St Anne's, our curriculum is proudly child-centred, placing children's interests at the heart of everything we do. We recognise and celebrate each child as a unique individual, and we thoughtfully adapt our teaching approaches and levels of support to meet their developmental needs. Our provision is rooted in a blended Curiosity Approach, offering enabling environments that are calm, purposeful, and rich in opportunity. We encourage children to be the "pilots" of their own play, leading their own learning through exploration, experimentation, and self-discovery.

Intent

We understand that children thrive in environments where they feel safe, respected, and emotionally secure. Practitioners prioritise the building of warm, trusting relationships with both children and families, recognising the foundational role of connection in learning and development. It is our intention that every child who attends Sunflowers at St Anne's is nurtured within a learning community that celebrates their individuality and offers daily experiences that ignite awe, wonder, and curiosity.

Recognising that we work with children during their most formative years, our practitioners draw on their extensive knowledge of child development to scaffold rich and meaningful experiences that support holistic growth—intellectual, social, emotional, and physical. The use of ambitious vocabulary and high-quality language is promoted throughout the setting to build strong communication skills from the earliest age.

Our learning environments are intentionally designed to promote independent engagement and extended periods of child-led exploration. Through these opportunities, children build the foundations of confident, capable learning skills and develop essential characteristics such as resilience, perseverance, and reflective thinking. The curriculum is structured to ensure that planned outcomes for each child are both unique and ambitious, helping them reach their full potential while preparing them for the next stage of their learning journey. Above all, we aim to set children on the path to becoming happy, curious, and lifelong learners equipped for an ever-changing world.

Implementation

At Sunflowers at St Anne's, we meet all statutory requirements set out in the *Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework 2021*. Robust safeguarding procedures underpin our practice, ensuring all children are safe, supported, and free to thrive. The key person approach plays a vital role in building close, trusting relationships with children and families, enabling effective communication, emotional security, and personalised learning.

Our curriculum is guided by the Educational Programmes from the EYFS and supported by the *Birth to Five Matters* guidance, helping to ensure a coherent and progressive curriculum across the seven areas of learning. Practitioners use formative assessment to inform next steps and summative assessment to monitor overall progress. Every child is understood,

valued, and tracked as a unique learner, with swift and appropriate strategies in place to remove any barriers to learning as soon as they are identified.

We provide a language-rich environment, where children are immersed in high-quality interactions, stories, songs, and conversations. Practitioners model extended vocabulary and use the ShREC approach (Share attention, Respond, Expand, and Conversation) to promote deep and meaningful language development. Vocabulary relevant to current learning is displayed around the setting to support consistency across the team.

Our curriculum follows a seasonal and story-based structure, where carefully chosen high-quality books and the changing seasons act as natural scaffolds for learning across the setting. These are used to design activities that are both engaging and suitably challenging, encouraging children to explore concepts across multiple areas of development. Learning spaces are continually enhanced in response to children's interests, encouraging further exploration, creativity, and discovery.

Play-based learning is central to our provision. Children enjoy sustained periods of free play in enabling environments that allow them to plan, lead, and develop their own ideas. In doing so, they build independence, executive function skills, and self-regulation. Alongside child-initiated play, our routines include adult-directed sessions such as storytime, singing, early phonics, and numeracy activities. Weekly sessions from external providers—Moo Music and Jumping Beanz—enhance children's experiences by promoting listening, rhythm, movement, and physical development. In addition, children in our preschool room take part in weekly French lessons, which introduce a new language through songs, games, and playful interactions. These sessions support listening and communication skills, cultural awareness, and build early foundations in multilingual understanding.

We place a strong emphasis on physical play, with a wide range of indoor and outdoor resources that support gross and fine motor skills, promote healthy lifestyles, and provide age-appropriate physical challenges tailored to individual developmental stages.

Impact

The impact of our curriculum is seen in the high levels of well-being, confidence, and engagement among the children. Practitioners build quality relationships with families, ensuring that learning is pitched appropriately and remains meaningful to each child. Successes are celebrated openly, and any barriers to learning are swiftly identified and addressed through timely interventions and collaborative strategies.

Our language-rich environment ensures that children develop both the understanding and expressive use of language. Children are able to confidently discuss their play, learning, and ideas in age-appropriate ways, supported by a wide and challenging vocabulary introduced through texts, conversations, and everyday experiences. Children participating in French sessions demonstrate enthusiasm and confidence as they sing, repeat new words, and show an emerging awareness of another language and culture, adding a valuable dimension to their communication and understanding of the world.

Our ambitious curriculum, led by quality-first teaching, is carefully monitored through observation, assessment, and reflective practice. This ensures all children make at least good progress from their unique starting points, across all seven areas of the Early Years Framework. We pay particular attention to Communication and Language, which underpins learning in all other areas. Outcomes show that the majority of children attain age-appropriate development in this prime area, establishing a strong foundation for future learning.

Ultimately, children leave Sunflowers at St Anne's as curious, confident, and capable learners, well-prepared for the next stage in their education and equipped with the emotional and intellectual tools to thrive in an ever-changing world.