



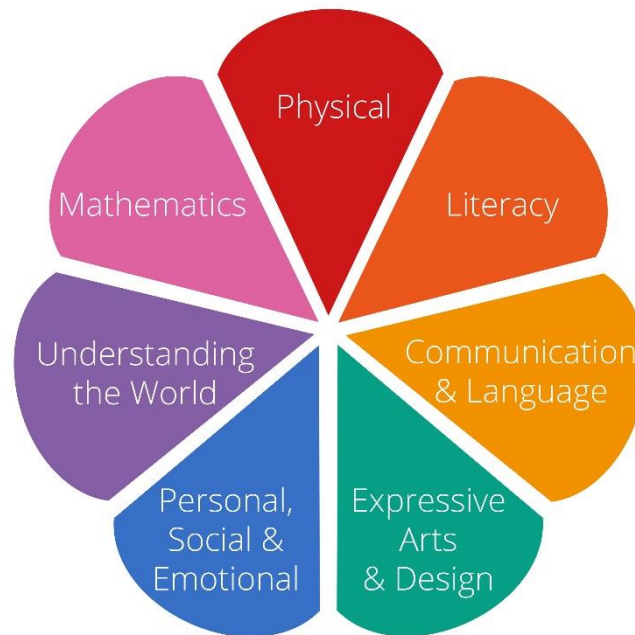
# Early Years at St Chad's



## **The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

The EYFS sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old.

The areas of learning within the EYFS are:



These seven areas are split into three age bands: Birth to three, 3-4 and 4-5 (the reception year in school). All children develop and learn at different rates and in different ways. Their development is not neat and orderly! That's why the Department for Education's guidance document, *Development Matters*, sets out children's learning in broad ages.

Here at St Chad's our Early Years curriculum has been designed and created to nurture and inspire our children so that they feel safe, secure and happy. We put children at the centre of their own learning, listening and valuing their thoughts, needs, opinions and interests.

## Learning Landscape

Our Reception classroom is set out in a way that allows children to access resources independently. We offer children effective continuous provision that is open-ended, accessible, flexible and skills-driven. Resources are open-ended and natural, encouraging children to use their imagination and demonstrate newly learnt skills. It is through natural materials that children can enhance their sensory development and use their own creativity to learn.

We have a large classroom, another room for role play and loose parts play, a sensory room and an outdoor area. Our snack area is open all day and children can access milk when they would like to. Children can choose where they will 'inventure' (investigate, adventure, invent) each day and have access to all areas of the Early Years environment.

Our learning landscape enables children to bring their magic with them into the environment and shape it themselves. We promote collaboration and self-chosen purpose.



## Learning through Play

“Children are magic. They live in a world that overflows with exploration, connections, dreams and imagination. They are trying to share this world with us all the time, because they want us to step through the door that leads there and join them.”

Greg Bottrill

Our Early Years Curriculum is taught through a ‘hands on’ practical approach, embracing and encouraging the children’s interests. The children learn through purposeful play, using a range of resources that ignite their curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

We strive to create a ‘play-culture’ where the adults become co-players with the children. Co-play is the key to adventuring with children into play, where we are as much a part of it as they are and the environment around us. Through co-play we are able to get to know each unique child, understand where they are in their learning and can identify and address next steps. It is through the children’s play that we can develop skills, support the children and ensure each child is making good progress.

Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning and therefore deserves to be a high priority within the learning landscape.



## Greg Bottrill

Greg Bottrill is a former Early Years Lead and Assistant Headteacher who is passionate about education being an adventure not a pre-drawn route for children. He believes that children need to experience something special within our settings, but also be given time and space to reveal their own understanding and magic. Greg works internationally with settings supporting their own adventures into the world of play and the magic of children.

## Drawing Club




Drawing Club is an approach designed by Greg Bottrill that immerses children into a world full of imagination. We at St Chad's fully embrace drawing club and can see the joy it brings to our children. It is through drawing club that we open up the magic world of tales and story to children whilst at the same time enriching their language skills, developing their fine motor and share a really special time with them. Drawing Club is a fantastic place to start a child's experience of school 'Literacy'.

<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
Vocab	Vocab	Vocab	Vocab	Vocab
Character	Setting	I wonder...	I wonder...	I wonder...

Drawing Club is based upon the 3M principle. These are making conversation, mark making and mathematics. We use a book, traditional tale or an animation as a portal for the week. Children learn new, exciting vocabulary that we revisit each day of the week. We draw characters on a Monday, settings on a Tuesday and we 'wonder' on a Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Below is an example of a plan based around 'The Three Billy Goats'.



The Three Billy Goats Gruff (animation) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QzT1sq6kCY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QzT1sq6kCY</a>					
Vocab	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Character	Setting		I wonder...	
luscious triple creaky fearless gruesome cunning determined	The troll Large oval head like a rugby ball. Medium sized, wonky nose in the middle of two sleepy eyes. He has hairs coming out of his nose and one of his ears. His teeth are sharp and rotten with some missing! Short, rounded body with clothes that are too small (showing his belly) Draw arms and legs but don't draw attention to details here. SS- the troll grows triple the size when he shouts 3 and presses the SS- a three within 3 circles. Password- 3+3=6	 <p>An arched bridge with three separate tunnels for the water to flow through. The bridge is made out of bricks and cement. It has gaps in the brick at the very top of the arch. There are slopes either side of the bridge for the troll to get up easily.            SS- hammer in a circle- the bridge breaks in half and the goats fall into the water for the troll to get. Password- <u>hahaha</u></p>	What foods could we give the troll to try so that he doesn't want to eat the goats?  Grass flavoured lolly pops- a swirl like a snail shell. Number 5 inside the lolly as that's how many licks you have to do to taste the grass.  Ice cream in a cone- cone shape with a sphere shape on top and a cuboid flake sticking out of the top.  Hard boiled sweet that takes a long time to eat. Each sweet has mint in the middle and a double layer of chocolate- milk and dark chocolate.  SS- goat horn shape with 'f' for food. Password is 'go'.	We need to set a trap for the troll. What should we do?  Plant a talking tin where the grass is gone on the goats side of the bridge- the goats have recorded themselves bleating and are hoping the troll will think there are more goats and will come out to investigate. Whilst the troll is looking for the goats, they can sneak across the bridge.  The talking tin is a cylinder shape with a speech bubble saying 'baa baa'. Add a drawing of the goats feet and 'sh' next to them. Secret symbol of a mouse in a circle to magic some mouse boots.	The goats could try fancy dress to trick the troll. What could they wear?  Long, baggy trousers to hide their skinny legs. Thick belt to hold the trousers up. Long sleeved jumper with a hood to hide the horns. Maybe some large, dark sunglasses to hide more of the goats hairy face. Some soft, furry slippers to make their 'trip trap' quieter.  SS- lips in a circle- press it and it changes your voice to human. The password is 'go go go'.

We add maths to our drawings by talking about shapes, doubling, halving, addition, subtraction etc... We might be drawing a troll with a spherical shaped head, 2 strong, wiry hairs on his chin and double this amount coming out of each ear. He has one more than 4 buttons on his filthy, ripped shirt.

Children observe as the teacher models drawing club each morning and then get the opportunity to complete their own drawings. They are invited to wear a lanyard showing they are part of drawing club and can borrow ideas from the teacher or create their own amazing ideas to share.

One of the most exciting parts of Drawing Club is adding secret symbols and passwords to our drawings. We always draw a secret symbol that can make anything happen! Sometimes we press them and aliens or unicorns become 3 times bigger, pencils turn into chocolate or hair turns multi-coloured! We then add a password to make the secret symbol work. This can be a mark, letter, digraph (2 letters that make one sound), a word or a sentence. As children make progress and become more confident with their phonics, their passwords develop and move towards phrases and sentences.

## The Message Centre

“Young children need to feel three things when they write and mark make: joy, purpose and magic. The Message Centre delivers all three of these in bucketloads.”

Greg Bottrill



The message centre is a simple rebrand of writing, messaging offers both children and adults a delight in what might otherwise be a struggle.

Here at St Chad's we ensure our message centre promotes these three 'ingredients' for children to discover the joy of mark making and writing. As Greg Bottrill says, when messaging takes off, the phrase 'reluctant writers' goes out the window! Children want to message – they love its simplicity and its warmth. We have found the message Centre is not only hugely impactful for writing, but it also has the ability to bring joy to early reading and mathematics.