



'Aspire not to have more, but to be more'

YEAR OF PEACE

EYFS NEWSLETTER

11th September 2025

EYFS Autumn 1 Curriculum Newsletter

Nursery & Reception | Autumn Term 2026

Welcome to EYFS

A very warm welcome to all of our Nursery and Reception children and families.

The beginning of a new school year is a significant moment, particularly for our youngest children, and we would like to begin by saying **well done to every child for the way they have started their journey at St Mary's**. Learning new routines, meeting new adults and children, exploring an unfamiliar environment and beginning to spend longer periods away from home are considerable achievements.

We also want to recognise the enormous role that **parents and carers have played in helping the children to settle so positively**. Your reassurance, preparation, encouragement and trust in the adults caring for your children make a genuine difference. The strong partnership between home and school is particularly important in the Early Years, and we look forward to continuing to build that relationship throughout the year.

During Autumn 1, our priority across EYFS is to ensure that children feel **safe, happy, known and increasingly independent**. Alongside this, children will begin building the language, knowledge and learning behaviours that will underpin everything that follows. Our curriculum combines purposeful play, carefully planned provision, stories, songs, first-hand experiences and explicit adult teaching.

Our Autumn 1 Themes

Nursery — *Nursery Rhymes*

Nursery begins the year with the familiar and language-rich world of **nursery rhymes, songs and action rhymes**. Children will hear and perform traditional rhymes, counting rhymes and rhymes from different cultures. Repetition, rhythm and rhyme provide an excellent foundation for communication, listening, phonological awareness and later reading.

Much of this half term is also about learning **how Nursery works**: recognising their name, becoming familiar with routines, developing confidence away from parents and carers, learning where resources belong and beginning to play alongside other children.

Reception — *It's All About Me*

Reception begins with **It's All About Me**, allowing children to explore identity, family, feelings, belonging and their new school community. Key texts include *The Best Part of Me*, *The Colour Monster Goes to School* and *Leaf Man*.



‘Aspire not to have more, but to be more’

YEAR OF PEACE

Children will use family photographs, create self-portraits, explore the changing autumn environment and begin thinking about what makes each of us unique while recognising the similarities that connect us as a class and school family.

Religious Education and Catholic Life



Throughout EYFS, Autumn 1 introduces **Branch 1: Creation and Covenant**.

Children will begin to understand that **God made and loves each of us**, that Creation is good and that we have a responsibility to care for one another and for God’s world.

In Nursery, this will be encountered through simple stories, prayer, songs and experiences appropriate to the children’s age and development.

Reception will deepen this understanding by exploring the Creation story, prayer, the Sign of the Cross and Baptism. Children will begin using important vocabulary including **God, Bible, Creation, prayer, family, Baptism and water**, and will explore what it means to belong to God’s family and our St Mary’s community.



Communication, Language and Literacy

Language sits at the centre of our EYFS curriculum.

In **Nursery**, children will develop attention and listening through stories, songs and rhymes. Adults will model clear sentences and useful social language such as “*my turn*”, “*help please*” and “*I need...*”. Children will begin joining in with repeated words, actions and rhyme patterns and will be encouraged to communicate their ideas and needs confidently. They will also explore environmental sounds, body percussion and rhythm while developing purposeful mark-making through paint, chalk, crayons, dough and other materials.

In **Reception**, children will discuss themselves, their families, feelings and school experiences. Through our core texts they will identify characters and settings, recall important events and begin answering *who*, *what* and *where* questions.

Reception will also begin **Little Wandle phonics**, introducing Phase 2 sounds and teaching children how to blend sounds together to read simple words. Writing is taught alongside phonics and Little Wandle handwriting. Children will learn to form taught letters accurately and begin applying their phonics when writing names, labels and early words. Children are encouraged to **say and rehearse what they want to write before beginning to record it**, establishing the oral foundations of successful sentence writing.



Maths

Our mathematics curriculum develops strong number sense rather than simply teaching children to recite numbers.

In **Nursery**, children will focus particularly on numbers **1–3**. They will learn to recognise small quantities without always needing to count them, show quantities using their fingers and understand that the final number said when counting tells us *how many*. Through play, children will also explore circles and triangles and use early mathematical language including *more*, *same*, *count*, *round*, *on* and *under*.

In **Reception**, our early number work also begins with a deliberate focus on **1, 2 and 3**. Children will develop subitising, counting, numeral recognition, comparison and an understanding of quantity using objects, fingers, sounds, actions and marks. They will sort and match objects, explore patterns and compare size, mass and



'Aspire not to have more, but to be more'

YEAR OF PEACE

capacity informally. Our number teaching is supported by **Mastering Number**, helping children build secure mathematical foundations before moving on to larger numbers.

Understanding the World

Autumn provides a rich opportunity for children to explore their immediate world.

In **Nursery**, children will talk about themselves, their families and important people in their lives. They will begin noticing how they have changed since they were babies and explore the Nursery environment while observing early signs of seasonal change.

In **Reception**, children will use photographs and simple timelines to talk about personal experiences and change over time. They will explore family, school and parish as different communities and consider similarities and differences between people. Outdoors, children will observe autumn, investigate natural materials, discuss changes in weather and learn how we can care for living things and our environment.

Personal, Social and Physical Development

A major focus this half term is establishing the foundations for **independence, confidence and positive relationships**.

Nursery children will learn familiar routines, begin separating confidently from their adults, develop trusting relationships with staff and learn how to play alongside others. Reception children will build secure relationships, identify trusted adults, recognise their feelings and personal strengths, practise turn-taking and increasingly manage familiar classroom routines independently.

Physical development happens every day. Nursery children will run, climb, balance, move and strengthen their hands through dough, threading, painting and large-scale mark-making. Reception children will further develop balance and coordination while establishing effective pencil grip, accurate letter formation and the fine-motor control required for writing.

Expressive Arts, Music and Imaginative Play

Creativity is woven throughout our provision.

Nursery children will experiment freely with **paint, crayons, chalk, collage and dough**, join songs and ring games, move rhythmically and begin copying repeated rhythms. Their imaginative play will draw heavily upon familiar experiences of home, family and Nursery.

Reception children will explore **line, colour, shape and texture** through self-portraits and art linked to feelings. They will work with natural materials inspired by **James Brunt**, explore their voices, begin keeping a steady pulse and respond physically to changes in tempo and dynamics. Role play and small-world experiences will allow children to recreate home and school routines and retell experiences from their own lives.

Keeping Safe with Technology

Across Nursery and Reception, we will begin establishing positive habits when using digital technology. Through familiar, age-appropriate teaching such as **Smartie the Penguin**, children will learn that if something they see or experience on technology makes them worried, unsure or uncomfortable, they should **stop and tell a trusted adult**.

Online safety will remain an ongoing part of our EYFS provision throughout the year.

Supporting Learning at Home

The most valuable support at this stage is simple and consistent. Families can help by **talking, reading, singing and encouraging independence**. Share nursery rhymes together; read and reread favourite stories; ask your child about their day and give them time to explain; notice numbers and small quantities in everyday life; talk about changes you notice outdoors as autumn begins; encourage children to put on coats, organise belongings and



'Aspire not to have more, but to be more'

YEAR OF PEACE

complete manageable self-care tasks themselves. Reception families can also practise the sounds and reading materials sent home, following the Little Wandle guidance provided by school.

Most importantly, continue celebrating the small steps. **Settling confidently, communicating a need, joining a group, attempting a new activity, remembering a rhyme or independently managing a routine are all important pieces of learning in EYFS.**

Thank you again for everything you have already done to support such a positive start. We are very proud of the children and look forward to a busy and exciting Autumn term together.

Have a lovely weekend -The EYFS Team