

How do our children engage with the provision?

Every area of both the EYFS and KS1 curriculums is planned through teacher-led sessions which start with a short input. Once the input is finished, some children complete their written tasks in small groups, where they may be supported by an adult, and the rest of the children access 'Busy Time' until they are called to the teacher table. During this time, the children have continuous access to a wide range of resources indoors and outdoors which have been carefully planned to support their learning and achieve the aims discussed above.

Every day, our children get the chance to be a designer, an artist, a writer, a scientist, a musician, a mathematician, a storyteller, an athlete, a geographer or a historian. Both inside and outside, you will see busy children actively engaged in a wide range of activities that they themselves have chosen.

We have seen our children independently:

- construct puppets from cardboard boxes to retell the story of the Nativity
- research flags on an iPad and make flags from different countries
- prepare and serve themselves ambitious fruit salads at our café
- nurture and care for seeds and beans to flourish into healthy plants
- use our puppet theatre combined with our construction materials to tell familiar stories and construct new ones
- design habitats for insects and amphibians in our wildlife garden
- create story and non-fiction books to share with their friends
- engage in sculpture, collage, drawing and painting using a wide range of materials
- create dens, waterfalls, rollercoasters and much more using our construction equipment



CONTINUOUS PROVISION



Effective continuous provision is open-ended, accessible, flexible, large scale and skills-driven. It is planned but only in a loose sense. An adult's plan isn't a child's plan. Children don't have to reach a specific outcome determined by the adult. Instead continuous provision should offer an index of possibilities. It should enable children to bring their magic with them into the environment and shape it. Equally it should create the conditions for collaboration and self-chosen purpose.

Greg Bottrill, Educational Thinker and author

What is continuous provision?

Put simply, continuous provision is the ability of the classroom environment to continuously facilitate learning without the necessity for adult intervention. In essence, the environment acts as the 'third adult' in the room. However, at St Thomas à Becket, we have found it is so much more than that. Our small class sizes allow us to carefully assess our children's needs, skills, knowledge and interests and plan our classroom environment to maximise the potential for learning across the EYFS and KS1 curriculums.

A well-planned, play-based approach to the curriculum, based on the individual child's interests, sparks curiosity and promotes challenge in learning. Underpinned by accurate, ongoing observations and assessments of our children, it allows them to independently learn and explore their own interests whilst providing numerous opportunities for staff to interact and move learning on. Additionally, staff may use enhanced provision (planned activities) to target specific areas of the curriculum and provide opportunities for consolidation or new learning.



Why do we use continuous provision?

In our mixed EYFS, Year One and Year Two class, we identified that children were craving opportunities to play and communicate with each other in a fulfilling environment. A plethora of research tells us that, in the first few years of a child's school life, talking to adults and their peers is one of the best ways to accelerate educational achievement. Therefore all areas of provision are designed to promote conversation and creativity in our children.



Research from educationalists such as Alastair Bryce-Clegg, Greg Bottrill, Anna Ephgrave and Elizabeth Jarman is a key inspiration behind our provision along with an in-depth knowledge of our children's needs. Whilst the provision has been designed with our four curriculum drivers ('Be Ambitious', 'Be Curious', 'Be Creative' and 'Be Resilient') in mind, one particular golden thread running through our environment is the need for independence. We have found that this approach prepares our children well for

their transition into Key Stage Two as they understand the importance of being independent and 'having a go' without the constant support of an adult.

Carefully planned play-based experiences inspire the children to consolidate their skills, knowledge and understanding enabling them to be independent, resilient learners who motivate themselves to take on the next challenge and push themselves to their limits.