**Early Years Pedagogy and Vision**

At St Martin de Porres, our Early Years curriculum is founded on the School’s vision and Mission Statement. At St Martin de Porres, our Early Years curriculum is founded on the School’s vision and Mission Statement. We embrace the Catholic virtues to inform our pedagogy, practice, curriculum and environment. Our **faith** guides our pedagogy, instilling respect and joy for our Catholic teaching.

Relationships are key to quality early years education and they enable us to enact our values and principles for young children in our care. We practice **service** by functioning as a supportive team, and modelling servitude through our daily interactions and fundraising for charities. We show **respect** and **inclusion** by embracing children’s individuality, valuing their voice, and listening to their thoughts, ideas, beliefs, and opinions. We act in each children’s best interest, providing equitable learning opportunities to ensure every child can reach their potential. We act with **justice, patience, love** and **forgiveness** by embracing a positive culture of error, ensuring children are guided by clear expectations and boundaries through positive guidance. We view children’s development as holistic, ensuring their emotional well-being is a priority. As a team, we embrace reflective practice, acknowledging we are all learners. We aim to instil a deep **love of learning** by planning an exciting curriculum and learning environment, and incorporating children’s interests.

Because Early Years plays a vital role in children’s educational foundation, we developed four key principles which guide our practice at St Martins:

* A **Curated Curriculum** which is carefully devised to include schemes of learning, exciting topics, and children’s interests. We cross-curricular Areas of Learning to ensure children develop a deep understanding.
* **Play** continues to be the best vehicle for learning. We promote play throughout our day, encouraging types of free-play, guided play, and purposefully-framed play. We ensure children’s right to play is protected and our learning objectives are carefully planned to be achieved in different play opportunities. These opportunities enable children to develop the important Characteristics of Effective Learning.
* The **Environment is the Third Teacher** in our Early Years unit. We believe the learning environment plays a vital role in children’s early learning. We carefully plan for our continuous and enhanced provision through weekly meetings; discussing current interests, topics, learning objectives and our intentions for children’s learning. Our environments are planned and prepared to be accessible, inviting, calm, and conducive to children’s learning. We ensure our displays, resources, and prepared activities are purposeful, meaningful, and intentional.
* **Intentional Teaching Strategies** guide our practice; informing how we teach. We use effective questioning, modelling, observation, demonstrating and narrating as key tools in our everyday teaching. This follows Doug Lemov’s ‘Teach like a Champion’ principles, which the whole school has adopted. We believe being intentional practitioners supports active teaching, and allows us to embrace a blended approach of teacher-directed and child-led learning.