



ST ANDREWS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
BANGKOK
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

*Foundation
Stage*

Primary School

Welcome to Our Primary School

“Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having the opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments.”

Development Matters - British Department of Education 2014

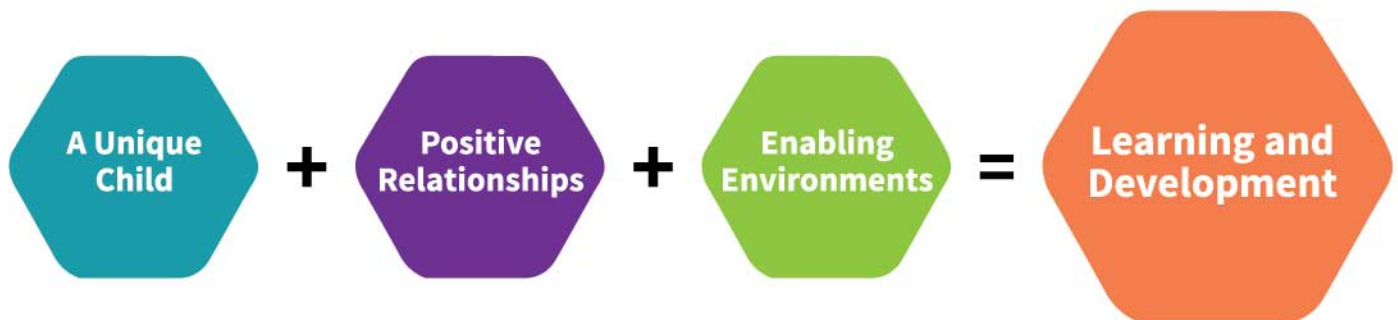
Foundation Stage Introduction

At St Andrews International School Bangkok, our **Foundation Stage (FS) Programme** consists of three Year Groups: FS1, FS2, and FS3. Children who are two years old before 1st September of the incoming school year are age-appropriate for FS1.

Each child is treated as an individual and will develop strong relationships in a fun, safe and encouraging learning environment. The learning environment, lessons and activities are designed to incorporate the different ways in which children learn.

The importance of play cannot be overstated. Much of our curriculum is delivered in ways that encourage discovery, multi-sensory exploration and role-play. Playing allows the child to develop an enormous range of skills with communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development being classed as the prime areas of learning. We follow the interests of the children providing flexible learning opportunities across all areas of development.

Our curriculum is in line with the UK's FS Curriculum, which has four guiding principles:



A Unique Child

Every child is a competent learner from birth, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.

Enabling Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and the curriculum encompasses the education and care of all FS children, including those who may have some learning challenges.



Facilities

In FS children make use of purpose-built spaces which have size appropriate furniture and facilities to inspire role-play, creative and collaborative activities. It is an open, bright and attractive building equipped with a wide range of toys and equipment, much of which is sourced from overseas to ensure quality and durability.

The children have access to:

- A large, air-conditioned '**Shared Area**' – perfect for collaborative learning and also contains a small library.
- A **computer pod**, with simplified keyboards that are ergonomically designed for young hands. Here the children collaborate and create using the latest educational software and hardware including tablets and other coding devices.
- All classrooms in FS have **interactive whiteboards**, enabling the children to have daily experience with computer technology.
- A **soft-play room** offers invaluable opportunities for the development of gross motor skills and physical confidence.
- The **cooking room** is used to develop their fine motor skills and learn all about healthy eating.
- **Outdoors play space** with a climbing frame, sandpit, water trays, painting zone, wheeled toys and a "mud kitchen."
- A **heated covered salt-water swimming pool** which is used by all classes in FS. With its shallow water, it is perfect for developing the necessary water confidence and basic skills that will lead to them being independent swimmers.
- A **gardening area** which has been set up so that children can learn about taking care of living things and have the opportunity to plant seeds and grow interesting plants.

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The Curriculum

We stay up-to-date with the best educational practices from around the world. However, our main curriculum direction is taken from the UK. As changes are made to the EYFS provision, we critically examine our own practices and institute any changes that would enhance the education that we offer.

The FS Curriculum is split into three prime areas of learning, four specific areas of learning and three effective learning characteristics.

Prime Areas of Learning – support all other areas of development

- Communication and Language – listening and attention, understanding and speaking
- Physical Development – moving and handling, health and self-care
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness, managing feelings and behaviour

Specific Areas of Learning – the essential skills and knowledge required for participation in society

- Literacy – reading and writing
- Numeracy – numbers, shape, space and measure
- Understanding the World – people and communities, the world and technology
- Expressive Arts and Design – exploring media and materials and being imaginative

Characteristics of Effective Learning – which move through all areas of learning

- Playing and Exploring – engagement
Finding out and exploring, learning from what they know and being willing to ‘have a go’.
- Active Learning – motivation
Being involved and concentrating, keeping trying and enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- Creating and Thinking Critically – thinking
Having their own ideas, making links and choosing ways to do things

Learning and Teaching in the Foundation Years

In the FS years and the early stages of Key Stage 1 we believe that the best way for children to learn is through play-based activities. Through a balance of child initiated and teacher led activities, we closely observe each child's development and consider the next steps they need to move forward in each learning area. As the children grow older, the adeptly structured Phonics, Reading and Mathematics programmes prepare the children for skills needed as they move up through the years.

Partnerships with Parents

We value the contribution that parents make to their child's development and believe in developing strong partnerships with families. Parents are expected to attend regular meetings to discuss their child's progress and the 'next steps'. Children's individual development and learning is also shared in their online journals. Weekly newsletters are sent out by class teachers and we encourage parents to share these with their children, discuss what they have been doing and what will be happening the following week, and involve them as much as possible in any choices and decisions that have to be made. For example, 'Which toy will they bring to the toy party?' and 'Who will they dress up as on Book Character Day?' We also hold numerous special event days which parents are always welcome to join.



Learning Support

Young children develop in different ways and our teachers are acutely aware of the need to monitor the development of each child, identifying the next learning steps and assess that they are making the expected progress. If concerns arise, the teachers confer with other colleagues and members of the Learning Support Team, and in collaboration with parents, plan a course of action to support the development of the area in question. After appropriate time working on specific targets, progress is then assessed and the next steps determined. This may include additional in-class support, or work individually or in small groups outside the classroom.

In some families, parents are aware from a very early age of a child's specific learning needs and declare these developing needs in their school applications. It is important that parents give us as much information as possible so that children can be given the right type of support from the start.

Some children may require a Learning Support Assistant for part of the school day so that they can access our curriculum. More details of this can be given on request or following the child's assessment or taster days.

Supporting the Development of English as a Second Language

Many of our children are learning English as a second, third or even a fourth language. Their capacity for learning languages is often astounding. At St Andrews teachers are experienced at delivering lessons to children who may be new to English and can, therefore, differentiate activities and paraphrase instructions in ways that easy to understand.

For some children, additional support may be available from an English as an Additional Language (EAL) teacher.

While a priority of ours is that children develop their English skills, we recognise that sometimes supporting new ideas in a child's home language is also very valuable.

If we hear children discussing a new concept in a language other than English we allow this to happen, then go over and consolidate the child's understanding using English, thus encouraging them to establish links. We believe that children must have the opportunities to engage in activities that depend solely on English for success, in ways that reveal what they know and what they can do.

Specialist Lessons

- The children experience **Thai language and culture** throughout their day and with specialist Thai lessons and experiences. All children take part in a rich cultural programme and celebrate the main Thai festivals such as Loy Krathong and Songkran.
- We put a strong emphasis on a child's home language as having a well-developed first language will help the children to learn English. Some children may have the opportunity to study their **native language**.
- Other specialist lessons include, **Physical Education (PE), Dance, Gymnastics, Swimming and Music**.



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Our School Day

Morning

The school day in **FS** begins at **7:45 am** (children are supervised from 7:30 am). After playing together, children say goodbye to their families and start the day with a short circle time before choosing or joining activities either child initiated or teacher led. Part way through the morning there is a healthy snack and milk offered.

Lunch

At **11:15 am** the children **break for lunch**. The older children eat in the main canteen serving themselves from the wide range of options available daily. The youngest children eat on "family style" group tables with teachers supporting them. The kitchen staff, academic staff and the PTG all work closely together to make sure that the food choices are healthy and nutritious. Thai and other Asian dishes are available daily, as are Western options. Menus can be viewed on Moodle and change weekly.

Afternoon

After lunch, the FS1 children go home, FS2 students have a choice for a nap or to continue with their child initiated play and the FS3 age children carry on with their timetabled afternoon activities.

A Well Child

Children in FS have more coughs and colds than in other parts of the school. Their immune system is still developing and they are still learning how to use a tissue, cover their mouth while coughing and wash their hands regularly. Teachers will talk to you about our definition of a 'well child' and give you some guidance about when you should keep your child at home.

If a child falls ill at school, we have a school nurse on-site who will contact parents if a child needs to go home, deal with any minor cuts and bruises and dispense any medicines that your child might be taking. All medicines, without exception, should be left in the nurse's room in a carefully labelled container.

For the health and safety of all students, please be reminded that St Andrews is a **Nut-Free school**.



School Community

We want all of our families to feel part of the school community so that, in turn our children will also feel part of the team and learn to enjoy working together towards common goals. It is also important for children to begin to learn about being part of a team, working collaboratively and starting to understand a little about competition, too.

To promote the idea of being part of a team, we operate a House System. The four Houses are named after hill tribes from the North of Thailand, and they each have a particular colour associated with them.

LAHU - Yellow

YAO - Blue

KAREN - Green

AKHA - Red

Staff and children are placed into one of the Houses, and on every Friday everyone comes to school wearing their House T-shirt. As part of the school uniform, the T-shirts are available from the Uniform Shop. All through the year the teachers run special House events, with some based on competitions and others designed to promote a feeling of community and working together.

We have a very active Parent Teacher Group (PTG) who provide invaluable support throughout the academic year at events such as International Day and Fun Day. They hold regular meetings in school that are scheduled and communicated in the weekly School Newsletter.



Educational Visits and Special Events

FS children will have the opportunity to go on a variety of educational visits in and around Bangkok. Educational visits enhance the children's understanding and enjoyment of what they are learning and provide them with a wider life experience. Trips will usually take place within school hours. Drinks, snacks and lunch are provided by the school canteen. Children are requested to wear their school uniform on day visits to enable them to be easily identified, and must bring hats to protect them from the sun. Parents are notified well in advance of trips. On some trips we welcome parent helpers but this should be arranged with the class teachers before the trip takes place as there are limited places available due to transport arrangements.

Throughout the year there are many special events and shows that take place in the FS which parents are invited to attend. There are Sports Days, Splash Days, Special Assemblies, Art Auctions, Book Weeks and International Weeks to name but a few! Children love to share these special days with parents, but we understand that you might not be able to come to each one.

Extra-Curricular Activities (ECA) Programme

Our school runs a 10-week Extra-Curricular Activities programme each term from 2:45 pm to 3:45 pm. This programme is offered to FS3 children and the oldest children in FS. Each term a different selection of clubs is available, including ballet, swimming, tennis, football and Thai Dancing Club among many others.

Please note: FS1 and FS2 children are not included in the Extra-Curricular Activities programme. FS3 children are invited to enrol as part of their transition into Key Stage 1.



Starting School in EYFS: Your Questions, Our Answers

What can I do at home to get my child ready to start school?

There are several practical things you can do to make those first few days go smoothly:

- **Read stories together** at home about starting school – discuss the people involved (teacher, assistant, other children) and the things they may do.
- **Establish routines** for going to bed and getting up in the morning so that your child is getting plenty of sleep and is used to getting ready by a suitable time – arriving late at school can be upsetting for children and does not allow sufficient time to say goodbye.
- **Practise** dressing and undressing with your child so that they can do this by themselves. Let them put on their own shoes and teach them how to recognise the correct feet.
- Teach your child basic English phrases: “**Good morning**”, “**please**”, “**thank you**”.
- For older children work towards making sure that your child can use the toilet **independently** and to practise good hygiene.
- Help your child to **recognise** their own names on bags, clothes and classroom labels and let them help to pack their swimming costumes and towels so they know which one belongs to them.
- **Label school bags and all items** of clothing, including swimming and PE kits.
- **Encourage** them to express their needs clearly and politely – e.g. needing the toilet, water, making simple choices.
- Teach them **independence** in moving around, eating with a spoon and fork and carrying their own belongings.
- Attend some playgroups or set up some play dates so that they are used to **interacting** with other children.

What will happen on the first day?

Before your child is invited into school for an assessment day, parents meet with the teacher to discuss your child's development, interests and home life. This pre-assessment meeting allows you to share as much information as possible to help your child's transition, it is also an ideal time to have any of your questions answered. Your child is then invited for an "**assessment day**" where they come to play with us on a normal school day joining a group of their peers in a range of activities. **This is not a formal test!** Please make sure you are available for the whole day and the youngest children will have a family member stay with them at least for the first day of school.

Teachers are looking for:

- An enthusiasm for school – curiosity and a willingness to participate;
- Some independence in terms of moving around, dressing, feeding and toilet habits;
- A willingness to communicate – if not in English at least an openness to learn;
- An understanding of appropriate behaviour.

At the end of the assessment day we will talk to you about how your child enjoyed the day. Some children may take some time to adjust to a new environment so it is not unusual for us to ask your child to come in for further assessment days, possibly in the company of a parent or caregiver to ensure that we have a smooth transition.

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