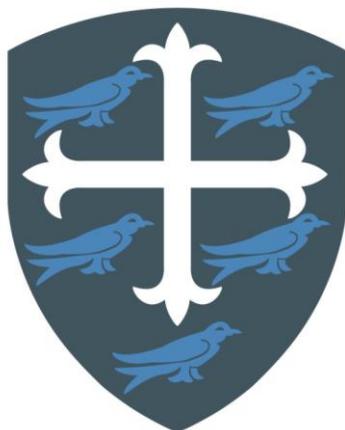


# St Mary's Catholic Primary School



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

<b>Legal Status:</b>	Statutory
<b>Last Review:</b>	June 2017
<b>Review date:</b>	October 2020
<b>Next Review:</b>	October 2022
<b>Responsible Person:</b>	Governing Body

### **Mission Statement**

"The family of St Mary's strives to grow in God's love and care by learning together and valuing the uniqueness of each person."

## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy:**

Every child deserves the best possible start in life in order to fulfill their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use Early Years services they want to know that provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive

At St Mary's our Foundation Stage classes are our Nursery and Reception class and they work closely together to provide quality provision for the children in our care.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. The EYFS is based upon four principles;

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

### **Aims:**

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which embraces the themes, principles and commitments of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- To ensure quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- To provide a happy, secure, stimulating and challenging environment.
- To provide opportunities for children to make choices which will facilitate independent learning, creative thinking and enable them to feel confident as learners.
- To provide opportunities for children to develop their communication, linguistic, investigative and problem solving skills through interaction with adults and other children.
- To promote children's imagination in play through stimulating resources and activities, both inside and out.
- To develop a partnership with parents/carers based on a shared understanding of the learning needs of the children.
- To provide quality first hand, play based learning experiences that are well planned and contain an appropriate balance between different types of play, permeating all aspects of the curriculum.
- To provide a range and balance of child initiated, adult led activities indoors and outdoors.
- To provide a smooth transition between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- To ensure that every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

### **Legislation:**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

### **We believe:**

- That all children in our care have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum (irrespective of learning needs, race, colour, gender, cultural/social background, or religion).
- That what each child can do is the starting point of his/her learning.
- That how we provide for and interact with children has a profound effect on their well-being and learning.
- That information provided by parents/carers is valued and seen as a vital link in forming a partnership with families and in building a picture of each child.
- That the Early Years Foundation Stage is the springboard to a good start in their education at school.

- That play is a major vehicle through which young children learn and gain access to all aspects of the curriculum. Free play reinforces classroom Learning. Free play is important to for healthy brain development, allowing children to use their creativity while developing their imagination, dexterity, cognitive and physical abilities. Play is a natural process. It puts children in charge of their own learning. It helps children to make sense of their world and enables them to develop their personal qualities, attitudes and higher order learning.
- That children learn more effectively in a lively, rich and stimulating environment with opportunities to access all areas of the curriculum indoors and out.

Essentially we want children to make decisions, become independent learners, interact with people, enjoy learning and become confident with themselves, others and our world.

### **Structure:**

Outline the structure of the EYFS setting:

- which years are covered
- how many hours are available in the nursery
- details of charging, if applicable

### **Guidelines:**

In providing a basis for our Early Years Foundation Stage Policy we have discussed and evaluated the following areas:-

- Staffing
- Indoor/outdoor provision
- Learning environments
- The revised Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and planning
- Observation, assessment, record keeping and target setting
- Partnerships with parents and families
- Ofsted
- Admissions
- Transition from our Nursery Class to Reception Class and from Reception to Year 1

### **Staffing**

Staff knowledge and expertise is seen as a prerequisite for an effective Foundation Stage department and this is accomplished by:-

- Staff working closely together so that knowledge and expertise is shared by all parties.
- Members of the team keeping abreast of relevant research and information.
- Staff attending courses, conferences and network meetings, as well as visiting other settings.
- Ensuring that staff have the appropriate training and experience with knowledge of child development and the Early Years. They will have the ability to structure and support young children's learning, lead and manage the team and work closely with other agencies.

### **Curriculum:**

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the Prime Areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The '**Prime Areas**' of learning, focussed on (building links to the 'Specific Areas' below) are:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development

The Prime Areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas.

The '**Specific Areas**' of learning, focussed on equally alongside the Prime Areas, are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

In addition to these areas Religious education is taught through half termly topics.

### **Planning:**

Learning experiences are planned for both indoor and out and are linked together through weekly topic/book focuses which encompasses the seven areas of learning alongside the children's interests.

Each Year Group considers how to provide for the children using three stages of planning

#### ➤ **Long term:**

This is a two year rolling plan informed by the Early years outcome statements and Early Learning Goals the children need to meet in their development. Continuous Provision plans show how each area of the environment supports the children's learning.

#### ➤ **Medium term:**

These plans cover the weekly topic and book focuses each year group will deliver. They include the details of possible learning activities and opportunities in each of the 7 areas of learning indoors and out.

As well as long term and medium term planning, we also carry out 'in the moment planning' which follows the principal that children have a natural desire to learn and explore so rather than pre-set activities we allow them to find their own interests through careful indoor and outdoor provision and use this to enhance and build upon.

#### ➤ **Short term:**

The weekly plans for each year group identify the learning intentions/outcomes to be taught along with evaluations linked to the activities provided. The needs of individual learners, based on observations, are catered for within this framework. Short term plans will be led and planned around the children's interests.

Learning outcomes are differentiated so that the more able are challenged and those that need additional help are supported. The next steps for all children are considered within the planning and adequate provision is made available so that children can meet their next steps.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

### **Indoor /outdoor environments**

The indoor environment will have provision for all areas of the curriculum. These may include:

- a creative area,
- investigation area,
- malleable materials area,
- mark making/writing area,
- construction area,
- small world area,
- mathematics area,
- role play,
- quiet reading corner,
- sand and water play

The outdoor environment will have provision for all areas of the curriculum. These may include:

- creative opportunities,
- exploring and investigating,
- small world play,
- writing/mark making opportunities,
- mathematical opportunities,
- role play,
- quiet area,
- physical play areas,
- including wheeled toys,
- large scale construction
- sand and water play

### **Transitions:**

In the Summer Term, children in both Nursery and Reception begin activities to support their transition to their next classes. A structured programme of activities and events begins to expose the children to experiences from their next school year to support a smooth transition.

Activities undertaken will include:-

- Learning walk- children walk through their new year group classrooms with their current teaching staff.
- Story time- children visit classes in the new year group for stories and rhymes.
- Teacher swaps- teachers from other year groups visit classes to get to know the children.
- Shared playtimes between reception and year 1 class in the second half of the summer term
- Home visits for new children joining the Reception class.
- An open morning for Nursery children to spend in the Reception class with their parents
- A parent meeting for Reception parents in the summer term to inform them about the year one curriculum.

### **Observation, Assessment and Record Keeping:**

At St Mary's, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

We use an online learning journal called Tapestry to record these as well as a folder of their independent and focus group work.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Exceeding expected levels or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

### **Nursery and Reception profiles include:-**

- Settling in observations during the first half term
- Adult led and child initiated observations across all areas of the EYFS curriculum.
- Grids highlighting the children's stage of development based on The Early Years Outcomes and the characteristics of effective learning.
- A record of children's next steps.
- Parental views and contributions of their child's learning
- Child's views and contributions about their learning.

## **Partnerships with parents and families**

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we believe that partnership with parents and families is paramount. To develop this partnership we provide the following opportunities:

- All Nursery and new Reception children have a home visit which is undertaken by our staff.
- Reception children and parents/carers are invited to meet their teacher through a transition morning
- Parents/carers are invited to come to a range of events through the year including stay and play, school trips, the class assemblies, Christmas Nativity performance and Sports Day.
- There are termly meetings with parents to look at the children's Learning profiles and have a more formal chat with the class teachers about the children's progress, their next steps and how they can help at home.

## **Meetings with parents:**

- Foundation Stage staff are available to speak to parents/carers before and after school
- Nursery and Reception have a parent/teacher consultation meetings each term to share their learning and next steps.
- There is a Foundation Stage open day for parents and carers to come and visit their child's new class and find out about what happens in a day

## **Information sharing:**

- Internet user agreements are issued when a child starts school
- Home/School Agreements are issued when a child starts school.
- Tapestry Parent Agreement
- Parents/carers are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning, (e.g. supporting their child at home with reading letter sounds).
- Nursery and Reception reports go out in the summer term

## **Safeguarding children:**

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns which the school has will be noted and if deemed necessary will be reported to the relevant agency. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance.

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

## **Allergies and medical needs:**

Parents/carers are asked to inform us of any foods their children are allergic to. A note of this is kept in the kitchen area and all adults working in the Foundation Staff are informed. We keep a note of any medical needs. Children who need inhalers have these in the classroom. Staff are made aware of each child's individual needs.

## **List of Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS**

- Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Health and Safety Policy
- Administering Medicines Policy
- Emergency Evacuation Procedure
- Procedure for checking the identity of visitors
- Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children
- Complaints Policy