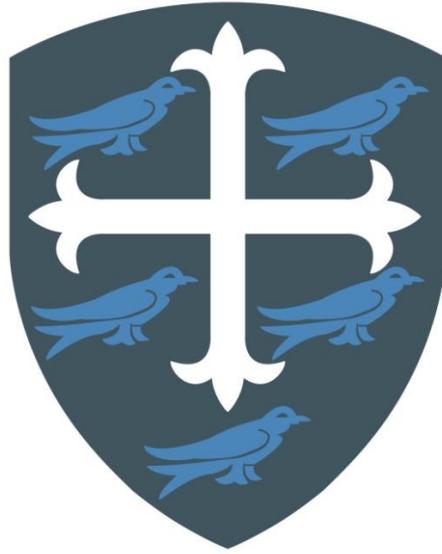


# St Mary's Catholic Primary School



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2021-2023

<b>Legal Status:</b>	Statutory
<b>Last Review:</b>	June 2019
<b>Review date:</b>	September 2021
<b>Next Review:</b>	September 2023
<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."

**Signed by Chair of Governors:**

**Signed by Headteacher:**

***There is a wide range of carefully planned activities which engage children in their learning inside and outside the classroom. Activities are specifically designed to address all areas of the early year's curriculum, and there is a balance between child-initiated and adult-led learning. There is a focus on language development.***

Ofsted – November 2018

### **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 setting they want to know that the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive.

At St Mary's our Foundation Stage classes include the Nursery and Reception class. 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 their 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 seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage as well as the knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- To provide quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress.
- 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 develop close working partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or 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 ensure every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- To provide a smooth transition between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

### **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 and/or 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 puts children in charge of their own learning and helps them make sense of their world. It enables children 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 outdoors.
- Essentially we want children to make decisions, become independent learners, interact with people, enjoy learning and become confident with themselves, others and our world.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

### **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 well-informed of relevant research and updated 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.

### **Structure of the EYFS**

At St Mary's we have one Nursery and one Reception class. Our Nursery offers part-time places (9am-12.00pm) and full-time places (9am to 3pm) through the application of the 30-hour code or by parents who pay. The afternoon provision costs £100 per week.

### **Curriculum:**

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 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 are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 'Specific **Areas**' which are:

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

Staff must also reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. Three **characteristics of effective teaching and learning** are:

- Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

In addition to these areas Religious education is taught through half termly topics following the Margaret Carswell Scheme of learning.

### **Planning:**

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. 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.

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.

- **Medium term:**

These plans cover the weekly topic and book of the week focus. They include the details of possible learning activities and opportunities in each of the 7 areas of learning indoors and out as well as visitors and educational visits linked to learning.

- **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. -Staff meet weekly to discuss the children's interests and plan through careful indoor and outdoor provision to use this to enhance the planned learning objectives.

The next steps for all children are considered within the planning and adequate provision is made available so that children can make progress and meet their next steps.

Staff use a mixture of Maths Mastery and White Rose Hub planning for Maths planning and Read Write Inc planning for phonics.

### **Teaching in the Indoor and 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,

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

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

### **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.

### **Assessment, Observations 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. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. All assessments are recorded in the children's individual online learning journal called Tapestry to record these as well as a folder of their independent and focus group work.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

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
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

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

- Baseline 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 sessions, school trips, the class assemblies, Christmas Nativity performance and Sports Day. They are also invited to read stories in their home languages to celebrate diversity and culture in school.
- There are termly meetings with parents to look at the children's Learning profiles and have a formal chat with the class teachers about the children's progress, their next steps and how parents/carers can help at home.
- Foundation Stage staff hold parents workshops during the year to help parents understand the Early Years curriculum and develop their understanding of the Maths Mastery approach and Read Write Inc Phonics.

### **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
- Individual school reports are sent home at the end of the year.

### **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 letters and sounds).

### **Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures:**

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.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- The importance of living a healthy life style

### **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.