

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Approved by:	Mrs. A Lauder	Date: 16.3.23
Last reviewed on:	16.3.23	
Next review due by:	16.3.25	

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1. Aims

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

(Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five)

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- The values set out in our mission statement underpin everything we do

2. Legislation

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

3. Intent

Our intent is to help children to develop to their individual potential both academically and personally and to be ready and confident to embrace their next steps in their learning journey. We aim to nurture every child through a high standard of education and a wealth of exciting learning experiences.

Through our values-based curriculum and engaging learning environment, we promote positive learning behaviours that foster skills for life-long learning.

Children learn responsibility for their behaviour, trying their best and being a thoughtful member of our community, both locally and beyond.

They explore and experience fairness and the place of justice in our local and global community. They begin to understand the consequences of thoughts, words and actions;

They learn about the importance of friendships and good relationships as they work and play together.

The 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' are at the heart of our Early Years Curriculum.

We recognise the identity of our school community by three overarching themes to our curriculum. They are:

Coastal	Catholic	International
We intend to teach children about their local beach environment, the stewardship of it and the impact of our behaviours upon climate change and pollution.	We intend to welcome children to our school family and the Catholic faith. We recognise each child as a unique individual with gifts and talents. We begin to support children to make a relationship with God and know they are loved by Him.	We intend to teach children they are citizens of the local and global community. We recognise, value and celebrate the variety of ethnicities in our school exploring languages and cultures.

4. Implementation

We provide a foundation stage curriculum in accordance with the government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (2021). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are all closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum, which allows children to make lots of links between what they are learning. All areas of Learning and Development are given equal weighting and value.

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 are:

- **Communication and language**
- **Physical development**
- **Personal, social and emotional development**

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the world**
- **Expressive arts and design**

4.1 Planning

Planning is done as a team in several ways and with an emphasis on the balance of adult directed and child initiated sessions which changes as the year progresses. The amount of adult directed learning gradually increases throughout the year as children become more ready for whole class and small group sessions.

Overview planning for Adult led whole class and small group sessions for maths, RE and writing is often based on a key text chosen to ensure wide and varied experiences and support progression of skills. These overviews then inform our weekly planning which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses

Daily phonics sessions using ELS (Essential letters and sounds) and weekly PE sessions are also taught.

Environmental plans also provide enhancements to our continuous provision. We do not write plans for child initiated learning as this is purely based on children's interests and teaching needs to be responsive and happen 'in the moment'.

The St. Mary's values that underpin our curriculum of: Collaboration, Service, creativity, confidence and independence are embedded and integrated into our EYFS curriculum every day. For example: The children are encouraged to work and play together indoors and out in a range of ways. Children are encouraged to take part in fund raising for charity days. Beach School and visits to the park help to develop children's confidence and creativity.

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We also:

- Monitor and assess the development of every child and plan accordingly
- Assess through high quality observations
- Provide a stimulating environment which reflects rich, varied and imaginative experiences that meet the needs of all children
- Develop the understanding that teachers have of a child's development and learning and what this means for their approach to teaching
- Involve Parents/Carers in their child's learning by inviting them to discuss their child's next steps at half termly meetings and invite them to workshops to help them support learning. They have instant access to their child's online learning journal through Tapestry. They are also invited to assemblies, celebrations throughout the year and the nativity play

- Liaise with SendCo, play therapist, Family mentor and outside agencies as appropriate
- The SLT ensures that ongoing professional development is available for all staff to ensure the curriculum requirements can be met

5. Impact

The impact of our curriculum on what children know and can do is demonstrated by:

being engaged, motivated and eager to join in. They show positive behaviour and good levels of self-regulation, cooperation and respect for others.

The carefully planned curriculum helps children achieve the EYFS early learning goals and make sustained progress. The children take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, social and emotional abilities.

They communicate and talk about their learning speaking with increasing confidence and fluency, which means that they secure strong foundations for future learning, especially in preparation for them to become fluent readers.

They demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning with high levels of curiosity, imagination and concentration.

Finally the successful partnership between teachers and parents, enables our children to feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.

6. Assessment

In the Early Years Foundation Stage at St Mary's Catholic Primary School ongoing assessments are an integral part of the learning and developmental process. This helps to ensure the children are making progress towards the Early Learning Goals. We make observations and assessments of each child's achievements and interests. These observations feed directly into assessment and planning.

Each child has a Tapestry learning journal where observations are recorded. Parents are able to see their child's learning and add their own comments.

Children's next steps for learning are reviewed and rewritten every half term in collaboration with the parents.

Teachers monitor children's progress throughout the year to ensure they are on track to meet Early Learning Goals. Where children are not on track, interventions are put in place to support them. Interventions are discussed with parents as part of the next steps meetings. If necessary, teachers will seek advice from the school SendCo who will involve other agencies such as speech and language therapy if appropriate.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1. The Profile must reflect practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

The Foundation Stage leader will:

- Communicate and understand the vision of the school and never lose sight of the link between the quality of provision and its impact on the children's learning and development
- Have high aspirations for children's achievement, irrespective of their circumstances or starting points
- Have high expectations of their team's performance and of the quality of teaching and learning
- Ensure consistency of teaching, learning and all routines across the Foundation Stage
- Moderate assessments made on the EYFS objectives in collaboration with other Foundation stage teacher, set targets and monitor progress
- Look for new and innovative early years ideas to create an exciting learning environment
- Carry out formal and informal monitoring
- Plan with the other Foundation Stage teacher an exciting and innovative curriculum
- Maintain resources

The Foundation Stage teacher will:

- Have high aspirations for children's achievement, irrespective of their circumstances or starting points.
- Ensure consistency of teaching, learning and all routines across the Foundation Stage
- Moderate assessments made on the EYFS objectives, set targets and monitor progress
- Carry out formal and informal monitoring
- Plan and deliver an innovative Foundation curriculum meeting all EYFS standards
- Maintain the aesthetics of the learning environment
- Maintain resources

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by teaching children about healthy practices such as getting enough sleep, exercising and eating a healthy diet. We talk to the children about the effects of eating too many sweet things and the importance of brushing their teeth.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by A. Lauder EYFS lead every 2 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy