

**ST VINCENT DE PAUL
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**



POLICY FOR THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

This policy was informed by the EYFS Statutory Framework (2014), the EYFS Practice Guidance and Principles into Practice cards and Development Matters in the EYFS (2012)
Quotes are taken from the EYFS Statutory Framework (2014).

“We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn love and grow together”

Source - School’s own version

Reviewed: Autumn 2018

Next review: Autumn 2019

Reviewed by: Teaching and Learning Committee

EYFS Leader: Mrs Val Hargrave

Signature:

Chair of Governors

Ratified at Full Governing Body meeting

Date ratified: 20th November 2018

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

All children deserve *"the best possible start in life and support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and five have a major impact on their future life chances."*

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school children may enter Nursery in the September of the year in which they are four and Reception in the September of the year in which they are five (unless summer born children opt to remain in Nursery for a further year).

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

Each of these has four commitments.

1. A Unique Child

1.1 Child Development

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

1.2 Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children are treated equally regardless of any protected characteristics or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

We believe that all children matter and give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking into account the range of life experiences when planning for learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

1.3 Keeping Safe

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (See Whole School Child Protection Policy)

Staff and parents/carers may not use mobile phones in the presence of children. "No mobile phones" notices are on display in all classrooms and general areas.

1.4 Health and Well-being

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."

The Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014 sets out legal requirements to:

- promote the welfare of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

2. Positive Relationships

2.1 Respecting Each Other

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

2.2 Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make in educating their children. We aim to establish a partnership with parents by

- inviting all parents/carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- visiting all children in their playgroup and at home prior to their starting Nursery;
- providing the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting in Nursery and before moving to Reception;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- reporting to parents/carers on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Class assemblies, Sports Day etc.

2.3 Supporting Learning

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them in order to support their learning more effectively. Encouraging, friendly and lively approaches support children and increase their motivation.

2.4 Key Person

The Key Person meets the needs of each child in their care and responds sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour. In the Nursery, children are part of a Key Group with their own Key Person and in Reception teachers act as the Key Person to each child in their class, supported by the teaching assistants.

The Nursery and Reception teachers meet with staff from local pre-school settings to discuss transition to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children's achievements.

3. Enabling Environments

3.1 Observation, Assessment and Planning

Planning begins with observing the children and assessing their interests, development and prior learning. Challenging but achievable activities and experiences are planned to extend the children's learning.

The planning within the EYFS is informed by the Practice Guidance for the EYFS, the Principles into Practice Cards and the Early Years Outcomes statements. We aim to make children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive.

3.2 Supporting Every Child

Regular assessments are made to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs for individuals. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observations made by the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These are recorded using Learning Journals and Development Matters statements.

At the end of the EYFS children's level of development is assessed using the Early Learning Goals which summarise the skills, knowledge and understanding they have gained. This EYFS Profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, exceeding expected levels or not yet reaching expected levels and is shared with parents/carers and Year 1 staff.

3.3 The Learning Environment

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS has its own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for learning in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children greater opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active, exuberant and healthy. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help them to develop in all seven areas of learning.

3.4 The Wider Context

We recognise that there is a need to work in partnership with other settings and professionals to support children's development.

We aim to ensure that children's social, emotional and educational needs are central to transitions between and within settings.

4. Learning and Development

The characteristics of Effective Early Learning are

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

4.1 Playing and Exploring

"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others."

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

4.2 Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. We aim to give children some independence and control over their learning. They are encouraged to develop their confidence, make decisions, keep trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.

4.3 Creating and Thinking Critically

Children are given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children access resources freely during Child Initiated Learning (CHIL) times, both inside and outside to extend their learning and develop ideas and strategies. They are encouraged to make links and connections in their experiences and review and make changes as required.

4.4 Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning. The three prime areas, which run through and support learning in all other areas, are:

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

The four specific areas, which include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society, are

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities.

Monitoring

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. (Mary Hewitson) This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and EYFS coordinator will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.