

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

St. Francis' Catholic Primary School



Approved by FGB on: N/A

Committee Responsible: Learning

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Early Years Foundation Stage

1. Intent

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at St Francis', we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life. All children deserve to be valued as individuals, and we are passionate in giving all children support to achieve their full, unique potential. In order for each child to follow their own learning journey and have their needs and stages of development planned for appropriately, the EYFS at St Francis' provides experiences and support to develop, physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally, whilst embedding a positive attitude to school and learning.

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.
Proverbs 22:6

2. Aims

- Provide children access to a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Build resilience, confidence & independence within learning
- Embed a positive attitude to lifelong learning
- Provide quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Ensure every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- Value children's unique journey from entry through to KS1 transitions
- Value and nurture a partnership between staff and parents and/or carers

3. 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](#).

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

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 **specific areas** are:

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

These seven areas of learning and development provide a framework for effective planning, teaching and assessing the early years curriculum. All areas are important and inter-connected.

Communication and Language:

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Physical Development:

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games

and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

Literacy:

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Mathematics:

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the World:

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of

the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children’s vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Expressive Art and Design:

The development of children’s artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

Religious Education:

This area of the curriculum is specific to us as a Catholic School. We follow the school R.E policy and teach from the ‘God Matters’ curriculum in conjunction with the diocesan scheme. The “God Matters” curriculum is followed throughout our school and is split up into ten themes, which are revisited and developed each year to support the faith development of the children. We are aware that children of this age are beginning their journey into faith and this may be their first opportunity to hear the good news of the gospel. Prayer and reflection is an important aspect of the school day, with opportunities for children to take an active part being offered to all.

5. Implementation

- Each year will begin by looking at the individual needs of our children and considering their different starting points. Previous setting visit and/or key worker conversations are arranged in the previous academic year to begin transition.
- Termly ‘Big Questions’, informed and influenced by the children, will result in celebratory WOW days or experiences to make pupils’ learning meaningful and purposeful
- Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.
- The learning environment will develop and promote independence within all our children by allowing them to access resources at child level and through adult support, enabling them to become responsible for their environment. The learning environment will be enriching, supportive and offer opportunities for children to showcase their learning
- the EYFS curriculum is delivered through a combination of continuous provision opportunities and directed learning, both within the classroom and outdoors
- EYFS practitioners will make professional judgements to inform future planning; the judgement is obtained through school assessment and home learning evidence via Reading Records, Tapestry and Class Dojo

6. Assessment

At St Francis, 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.

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

Children will continually be assessed through observations and interactions within the whole class, small groups or individually.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 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.

7. Working with Parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents are invited to attend a 'New Parent' meeting in the term prior to starting school. Each parent/carer is given an 'All About Me' booklet so the Reception teacher and staff become familiar with the children and their families. 'Stay and Play' visits are arranged for pupils and parents to visit the school and build relationships with the staff in preparation for starting school the following September.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development throughout the year with the use of reports and parent/carers meetings. The EYFS profile at the end of the Reception year also helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

We also forge strong relationships with parent/carers through stay and play meetings, curriculum meetings, Tapestry, Secret Readers, WOW days and Class Dojo.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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.

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

9. 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 Safe Guarding Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See Health and Safety Policy
Administering medicines policy	See Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy and First Aid Policy for EYFS
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Health and Safety Policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See whole school Child Protection and Safe Guarding Policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing child	See whole school Procedure for Child Missing in Education Policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See whole school Complaints Policy

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by EYFS Teacher and approved by Head Teacher every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with and approved by the governing board.