

# ENGLISH MARTYRS' RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY



### Curriculum aims and principles

*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfill their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future chances”,*  
(Statutory framework for the EYFS, DfES 2007).

The Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to five years. The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage. Our school has been following the guidance set out in the new EYFS framework. Our provision reflects the principles of the EYFS framework and its over-arching themes and principles:

- **A Unique child** – every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents or practitioners.
- **Enabling environments** – The environment plays a key role in extending and supporting children’s development and learning.
- **Learning and Development** – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

### Aims

- To provide a happy, caring and safe environment
- To build positive social relationships with adults and peers
- To facilitate quality learning experiences through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity
- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum, stimulating children and following their own interests and cultural backgrounds
- To provide regular opportunities for parents and carers to actively participate in their child’s development both in and out of school

- To secure a consistent approach in provision across the Foundation Stage
- To ensure children progress toward and beyond the Early Learning Goals
- To ensure children leave as confident, independent and enthusiastic learners

## **Principles**

- Children should be treated as individuals, acknowledging that they develop at different rates
- The most effective learning takes place when children are actively involved in the process
- The environment should facilitate situations where the social, physical, spiritual, emotional and moral needs of children can be developed
- Children are confident in their own abilities and can think and act independently
- Parents are the earliest influence on their children's learning and need to be actively involved in the process

## **Links with other policies**

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy; Behaviour Policy.

## **Inclusion**

This policy builds on our school Inclusion policy and recognises the entitlement of all children to be given the skills they need to develop into confident learners.

## **Welfare**

“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.”

We understand that we are required 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 is 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.

## **Special Educational Needs**

It is important that any special needs are identified as early as possible and that relevant steps are taken to provide the correct support while working alongside parents, the SENCO and any external agencies.

## **Organisation – Induction Arrangements**

### ***Nursery***

When children are allocated a Nursery place, parents are invited to visit the Nursery with their child during the summer term where staff and parents can discuss any particular needs of the child. We also offer Home visits to ensure a smooth transition into Nursery. Parents are also invited to attend an induction meeting in July. Children may also start Nursery at other times during the year as places arise. In December, we hold induction meetings, visits and home visits to prepare the children who begin Nursery in January.

### ***Reception***

Similarly, there is an induction meeting for parents in July where parents have the opportunity to meet the Head Teacher and the Reception staff and will receive information on uniform, routines, etc. This includes the parents of children joining our school from other nurseries. In addition to this, children will have the opportunity to visit their Reception classes during the Summer Term.

## **Times**

The Nursery sessions are currently running from 8.45-11.45am and 12.15-3.15pm in line with the fifteen hour entitlement. Children should be dropped off at the Foundation Stage entrance. Collection in the morning, will be from the Foundation Stage entrance door, and the afternoon Nursery class will be collected from the Outdoor Gate, to avoid congestion.

The Reception day runs from 8.45am-3.15pm. Children should be dropped off and collected from the Foundation Stage entrance by an adult.

## **Location**

The Nursery and Reception settings are currently in the same classroom space. They have independent learning areas, and a shared Creative Area with access to sand, water and malleable materials. Reception class has a quiet teaching area outside the shared area, where more focused teaching takes place. There is an outdoor area which is shared between both Nursery and Reception and accessible from the classroom.

## **Indoor and Outdoor Provision**

In line with the statutory requirements set out in the EYFS framework, all children now have daily continuous access to the indoor and outdoor environments. Staff continue to develop the Outdoor environments and provision.

## **Transition into Year One**

Children will receive a transition to facilitate a more positive experience for all of our children to continue their learning journey into Key Stage One. This will be achieved by visits and induction meetings for the children.

## **Planning and organising the curriculum**

The Foundation Stage curriculum is based upon the seven areas of learning as set out in the EYFS Framework from September 2012. Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice 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.

The curriculum itself covers seven areas of learning which are set out as follows:

### **Prime areas**

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and Language

Physical Development

### **Specific areas**

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive art and design

*“It is crucial to their future successes that children’s earliest experiences help to build a secure foundation for learning throughout their school years and beyond”, (Statutory framework for the EYFS, DfES 2007).*

The curriculum has been organised into a programme of themes covering significant events over the year. Staff also work very closely following children’s interests and relevant work can be planned to challenge and extend their thinking in line with this.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds', teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

*"Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities." (Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, p.9, DfES, Sep 2014)*

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. We aim to create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

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; and
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

## **Planning**

Foundation Stage staff currently use a system of planning which tightly links into assessment procedures. Long term plans are linked to continuous provision and matched to the Early Learning goals. Medium Term plans show enhancements for continuous provision and match this carefully to Early Learning goals across the spaces for play in the setting. In the short term, staff carefully differentiate focus activities that are carefully planned to support and enhance children's interests and development.

## **Assessment and record keeping**

Assessment forms a large part of our practice in Foundation Stage and is carried out daily by all staff in the settings. We observe children at play and collect evidence of their learning and development in a range of ways including photographs, annotations, learning stories, children's work and quotes. This evidence is used to inform daily planning, themes for interest topics and added to individual progress summaries each term which plot the next steps for each child. These are shared with parents through our termly meetings.

## **Learning journals**

Each child has had their own individual journal or 'Learning Journey' which will document their own individual learning journey throughout Foundation Stage. They will show the learning stories, annotations, photos and any other work collected from each child. These will be used in school, with all parties involved in the child's development contributing to these. Home Learning Journals are also used to note children's interests at home and are used to support children's interests in school, and strengthen home/school links.

## **Tracking**

The progress of each child in Foundation Stage is currently monitored on a tracking system from Nursery through to Reception. It uses information from the EYFSP Baseline sheets which is represented in developmental ages to show if the child is on track. The data from this is used by staff to identify children needing extra support or children who need to be challenged more and helps staff to ensure children are making the expected individual progress.

## **Target setting**

Each child will be set targets through their termly progress summaries for the areas appropriate to them. The targets will be shared with all staff and parents to help support the child. These targets will be built into planning where appropriate and support through the spaces for play by all adults.

## **Staffing and resources**

The Foundation Stage Team currently consists of:

Nursery; One teacher and one full time nursery nurse

Reception; One teacher and one full time nursery nurse

Staff are fully involved in whole school staff meetings and developments and also hold their own team/planning meeting on a weekly basis.

## **The Role of the Key Worker**

At our school the EYFS teacher acts as a 'Key Person' to all children in the EYFS, supported by the teaching assistant.

## **Resources**

These are audited on a regular basis by each setting and compared against recommendations for provision for each of the spaces for play. We also look at resources to cater for children's interests and related topics as they arise. Resources are shared between the settings where needed. Ideas for provision and enhancements are discussed at our weekly meeting.

## **Budget**

Any budgets allocated to Foundation Stage are spent carefully on areas identified as needed by the whole team.

### **Staff development and support**

Staff are given the opportunity to express preference for any training or development needs they may have and efforts are made to address these. Information from training is passed on to the rest of the team where appropriate.

Newly Qualified teachers are given opportunities to attend the relevant training provided by the local authority to support their induction.

### **Partnership with parents**

We believe that all parents have an important role in the education of their child and understand the future part they will play. To acknowledge this we aim to:

- Arranging for visits to the school in the summer term for children to spend time with their teacher in the setting that they will enter in September;
- Inviting all parents to an Induction meeting in the summer term;
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice yearly at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- All parents are invited to Curriculum Days, held once a term, where they can participate and observe their children, in the setting;
- Collaboration between home and school to update Home Learning Journals and share this with children regularly;
- Liaise carefully with parents of children who have special educational needs and those with English as a second language;
- Communicate end of year progress through an individual written report and personalised targets.
- A further range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents such as Class Liturgies, Whole School Masses, Sports Day, Family Learning Activities etc;

### **Links with the community**

#### **St Hilda's Parish**

Children have a link with our parish church throughout the year. Father Michael also visits school to lead acts of worship and a termly Mass.

### **Speech and language/SEN support services**

When children are identified, with the consent of parents, to any of these agencies, information is passed on and updated regularly to ensure children receive the support they need as often as possible.

### **Local EYFS Support**

The school also receives regular support from Early Years Support teachers through cluster meetings and planned training/drop-in sessions, to support with a variety of areas of provision.