

Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

**Together with the Spirit
we will create an oasis
where every child matters**

Aims

At SS Peter and Paul's Catholic Primary School we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. We aim to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent and fearless lifelong learners.

We will encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere; to support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing; to help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually, and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We will offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited availability for development through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences. We will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

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

Legislation

At Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School, our policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

Structure of the EYFS

In our school we have two part-time nursery classes and one full-time reception class. Each nursery class has 26 places and children are offered a place in the September following their third birthday.

Children in their immediate pre-school year are entitled to a whole year of Early Learning and Childcare. Children in their ante pre-school year are entitled to a place in the school term following their third birthday as follows:

March to August

In Nursery there is one full-time teacher and one full-time HLTA. As attendance to our nursery classes is on a part time basis, this allows places for 52 children. Each nursery child starting in September is guaranteed a minimum of three terms attendance either on a morning or afternoon session or blocked sessions of 2 and a half days, before they are due

to enter full time school. Most children access 15 hours provision over the school week, some children are entitled to 30 hours provision.

Our Reception class has a full time teacher and a full-time teaching assistant. To ensure best practice and continuity our foundation stage classes work closely together.

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 is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the nursery and reception teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics 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.

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

Planning

At Ss Peter and Paul Primary Foundation Stage all areas are delivered through a well-planned play based approach, with a balance of adult led and child initiated activities.

Throughout the foundation stage our long, medium and short-term plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level in line with the EYFS Framework and a suitable curriculum to meet the needs of our pupils. Our long term planning ensures coverage of the Early Years Framework, and covers the Development Matters statements to support holistic child development and readiness for Key stage One. Our curriculum is mapped out through the use of high-quality, core texts which are relevant and inspiring to our pupils. Our flexible approach means that teachers and staff can plan for an enabling environment to inspire and motivate learners as well as covering topics inspired and led by our pupils.

Teaching

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.

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.

Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

Assessment

At Ss Peter and Paul, 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 consider observations shared by parents and/or carers. Our adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

Staff will work closely as a team to share information daily to ensure accurate observations and interventions are reactive to ensure pupil progress is paramount. Half termly Pupil Progress meetings will ensure which children are on track/not on track (school language - met/not yet) to reach a good level of development.

When a child starts **nursery**, the nursery staff will work closely with parents, carers and the pupils to ensure that a “picture” can be built up of a child’s development to date and particular interests. During the first half term nursery staff will build relationships with pupils, thus will provide opportunities to “baseline” the pupils and allow for staff to plan to meet the needs of the child. Staff will liaise with additional agencies such as SALT, Health Visitors etc where necessary.

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.

Working with parents

We recognise that parents are a child’s first educator and therefore children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child’s progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities. Where possible, face-to-face meetings will occur to inform parents of their child’s progress.

Inclusion

Our whole school ethos, as well as that of the foundation stage, embraces inclusion. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children are able to reach their full potential. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We aim to 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.

We will provide: a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively; a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued; resources which reflect diversity and are free from

discrimination and stereotyping; challenging activities for all children and for those whose ability and understanding are advanced. We will monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary. Where a specific need is suspected we will liaise with the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator and seek advice from outside agencies, such as the speech and language service, the educational psychologist and the bi-lingual support services amongst others. We adhere to the Equal Opportunity and Inclusion policies of the school.

Early Years Pupil Premium – we will endeavour to identify our least advantaged pupils and inform parents or carers of their opportunity to apply for their child's entitlement to extra funding in school. All extra funding we receive will be used to support areas in which we identify that the child will best benefit. We will track children's progress to ensure that they are making good progress and to ensure that support is adjusted to target specific areas as the child develops.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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 follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2021) and we adhere to the school's safeguarding policy.

We are a healthy school. Our Nursery children receive free milk and all children have access to fresh water and free fruit from a Government scheme. Reception children are eligible for free school meals.

Each foundation stage classroom has access to toileting facilities. We teach the children the importance of hygiene, oral health and hand washing techniques. Throughout the year we plan cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food and making healthy choices.

Community Links

The foundation stage classes enrich learning and encourage strong links with the local area. This is achieved through both internal and external trips where permitted.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Ashleigh Rutherford (EYFS Lead) and approved by Maria Butt (Head Teacher) every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Policy date: 10.10.23

Review:10.10.24

A. Rutherford