



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Status	School need
Policy last reviewed	September 2018
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Term of next review	Autumn 2021

1. Mission Statement

Our mission statement commits us to the development of the whole child and to provide a learning environment in which they can reach their full potential, as children of God. We are committed to working with parents to this end. This policy statement outlines how we intend to fulfill our school mission.

2. Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides a solid foundation upon which all children are given the opportunity to build and extend their knowledge and develop to their full potential. It forms a single framework for care, learning and development and provides the means for children to flourish throughout their school years and on into adulthood.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum caters for young children from Birth to the end of the Reception year. It sets a series of 17 learning goals (known as Early Learning Goals) for children to work towards by the time they reach the end of the EYFS at the age of 5+ years. For most children, the end of the Reception Year will be the end of the EYFS when the expectation is that the majority of children will have achieved a 'Good Level of Development' and will have achieved the 'Expected' level in the Prime Areas of Physical Development, Communication and Language and Personal, Social and Development. They will also have achieved the 'Expected' level in Mathematics and Literacy (Reading and Writing) which are the Specific Areas. of the EYFS Curriculum, which means that they are meeting age related expectations for the end of the EYFS. Some may have 'Exceeded' the Early Learning Goal and will be operating at National Curriculum Level in some, or possibly all areas of their learning.

In January 2009, St. Monica's Pre-school was established on the school site, which is now authorized to accept up to 30 children from the age of 3 years. Although a separate provision, Reception and Pre-school staff liaise closely to provide a seamless transition for entry into St. Monica's Catholic Primary School at the beginning of the academic school year in which the children are five. Joint events for parents are held each term to develop understanding of this unique phase of their child's education.

In Reception, we aim to provide a high quality, well-resourced learning environment. Our aim is to make a positive contribution to this distinct stage in a child's development through the development of the key learning skills of speaking, listening, concentration, persistence, co-operation, literacy and numeracy through rich, stimulating and appropriate experiences. Through the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, we also aim to develop the children's understanding of British Values and broaden their understanding and acceptance of other faiths and cultures.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 To ensure that each child's experience of the EYFS at St. Monica's is happy and positive.
- 3.2 To ensure that all our children feel valued and secure in the early years environment.
- 3.3 To help children develop self-control, resilience and to develop a tolerance and understanding of the needs, feelings, abilities and cultures of others.
- 3.4 To encourage parents/carers to take be actively involved in their child's education.
- 3.5 To develop good relationships and effective communication between our school, St. Monica's Pre-school, other nurseries, the parish community, the general community and other agencies to plan effectively for the future learning of the children in our care.
- 3.6 To ensure a broad, balanced, challenging curriculum is provided through carefully planned, sensitive adult interaction, differentiated continuous provision which encourages independent, child-initiated exploration through positive play experiences. This will be implemented using the Early Learning Goals while having regard for the skills and attitudes that the KS 1 National Curriculum will demand.
- 3.7 To provide a curriculum firmly based on active learning, to meet the needs of the individual child. As there are wide variations in development and maturity within any EYFS cohort, as well as family, religious, cultural and special needs, these factors are taken into account when planning a developmentally appropriate curriculum for each child's individual needs.
- 3.8 To encourage a love of learning, enquiring minds and the ability to discuss, adapt and negotiate. Well planned play and purposeful, challenging activities, both indoors and outdoors aim to provide excellent opportunities for quality teaching and learning.
- 3.9 To provide a variety of teaching approaches that enable our children to become actively involved in their learning.
- 3.10 To ensure that there are regular opportunities for young children to communicate and talk about their learning and to develop independence and self-help skills.
- 3.11 To provide the opportunity for each child to develop an awareness of another language and culture and learn how to acquire some simple French vocabulary, through songs, stories and role play.
- 3.12 To ensure that we provide a clean, safe and secure, well-resourced learning environment and a rich and varied curriculum, both indoors and outdoors.
- 3.13 To ensure close monitoring of each child's progress throughout the EYFS through continuous observation and assessment. This information is regularly shared with parents and used to plot progress, identify areas of concern and to inform future planning.
- 3.14 Regular monitoring of our provision to evaluate and improve it.
- 3.15 Regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the Early Years Foundation Stage to continue our professional development as effective early years practitioners.

4. The role of Play

Play is crucial to the young child's development and a very important aspect of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Through play, young children explore and develop their learning, develop the resilience to persevere and build upon experiences that enable them to make sense of the world. Through continued practice, they learn how to develop self-control and begin to develop an understanding of the need for boundaries. They have the opportunity to make choices and think creatively, both alongside their peers and individually. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

5. Inclusion

At St. Monica's we believe that every child should be given the opportunity to achieve their true potential whatever their capabilities. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we strive to ensure that we provide all our children with the opportunity to succeed by providing a differentiated curriculum which is tailored to the needs and abilities of the child and builds upon their prior learning experiences.

Challenging, yet realistic expectations are set, tailored to the needs of the children, to build confidence and self esteem and help them develop to their full potential.

The 'Every Child Matters' document and the statutory EYFS Guidance shape the ethos of the Early Years Foundation Stage at St. Monica's. All Staff continually strive to meet the needs of all the children by:-

- 5.1 Planning opportunities that build upon and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- 5.2 Using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs.
- 5.3 Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to become effective, capable and independent learners.
- 5.4 Offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is welcomed and valued.
- 5.5 Promoting the need to enjoy a healthy diet and take regular exercise. Also the need to have access to drinking water throughout the school day to enable children to maximize their learning potential.
- 5.6 Employing resources that reflect positive cultural awareness and diversity and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping.
- 5.7 Planning challenging activities for all children to meet their needs and abilities.
- 5.8 Monitoring children's progress, and providing support or seeking advice from outside agencies as necessary.

6. Safeguarding

- 6.1 Our children's safety and well-being is paramount. To this aim, the school has developed a safeguarding policy and strict guidelines for all staff to operate within at all times.

- 6.2 All staff members at St. Monica's are DBS checked and these are regularly updated, according to the L.A.'s recommendations. Staff must follow the school guidelines at all times when working with the children.
- 6.3 Supply staff and all students working with the children as part of their training are also DBS checked accordingly and this is monitored by the Head teacher.
- 6.4 For children requiring intimate care, an 'Intimate Care Plan' must be completed and signed by the class teacher and parent/guardian., outlining the difficulties and the role of staff to assist the child. Staff must follow the school's policy guidelines on Intimate Care. Early Years staff are required to complete the class record book when it is necessary to change a child. Wherever possible, EYFS staff are required to change a child who regularly wets/soils on a rotational basis.
- 6.5 Parent volunteers coming into class to assist are most welcome, but must work under the direction of the class teacher, within the classroom and should not be left unsupervised with children at any time.
- 6.6 Parent helpers assisting the class teacher on trips should not be left unsupervised with their small group. Any toileting should be undertaken by a member of the school staff.

7. The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage reflects the seven areas of learning identified in the Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. It is planned according to the developmental needs of the child from birth to five years.

At the end of the Reception year, the class teacher completes the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, based on her ongoing assessments of each child through the year to assess whether a child has achieved a 'Good Level of Development' in the Prime Areas of Learning and also in the Specific Areas of Literacy and Mathematics. Recommended changes have been made to the teaching of phonics in Reception. The Letters and Sounds Phonics programme is delivered daily in short, discrete sessions in smaller group sessions delivered by the Class Teacher and the Teaching Assistant and is evaluated at the end of each week to plan for future learning.

Close links are forged between Reception and St. Monica's Pre-school to ensure that the transition to school is a smooth one. The Reception teacher and Pre-school leader work closely together to ensure continuity of learning and provision.

From the outset, we aim to establish very good communication links with all parents and carers. We encourage parents to feel welcome to come into school to discuss any concerns they may have with staff. Joint EYFS Workshops for Speech and Language, Phonics and Number are held during the year in order to provide parents/carers with the information and advice they need to be actively involved in their child's learning.

We also liaise closely with our other partner nurseries and arrange a series of visits to prepare for the children starting school. The Reception teacher meets regularly with other EYFS teachers in a local cluster group to ensure consistency of practice. Similarly, later on, as the Early Years Foundation Stage is completed, moderation of end of year assessments is undertaken by Reception and Year 1 teachers to ensure continuity and a smooth transition into Key Stage 1 for our children. The Year 1 teacher will continue to cater for the developmental needs of all the children through the curriculum, including those still following the EYFS curriculum if they are 'Emerging' within the Early Learning Goals.

The Curriculum Guidance continues to provide the framework for planning. Themes for teaching and learning are significantly influenced by the children's current interests. We

use the 'Letters and Sounds' program for the teaching of phonics in school. Our medium-term planning is completed half-termly and is adapted to include the children's current interests and the characteristics of their learning. This identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals and where appropriate, the National Curriculum Levels.

8. Religious Education and Faith Formation

Reception children participate in all aspects of the religious life of the school, attending Masses, services, assemblies and special events that take place during the liturgical year. Like all classes, the Reception class leads class assemblies and participates in daily acts of collective worship. Joint EYFS assemblies are also held with Pre-school on a weekly basis for the two classes to worship together and they work collaboratively to perform an EYFS Nativity performance. In school we use a religious education scheme approved by the Bishops of England and Wales, called "The Way, the Truth and the Life" which is in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, disciplines and general norms of the Catholic Church. This runs alongside the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and compliments many areas of learning that the children are introduced to.

9. Assessment

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile enables the Reception Teacher to record observations and assessments Early Years staff have undertaken throughout the year and to summarize pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals at the end of the academic year. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the EYFS statutory guidance. Ongoing assessments and tracking of children's learning takes place throughout the year and is used to inform future planning and cater for the varying needs and learning styles of the children. Assessment takes the form of observations, using the 2 Simple assessment tool and photographic evidence, looking at the children's self-initiated activities, the use of questioning and practical assessment. Assessments are carried out by all staff working in the Reception Class.

In Reception, photographs and examples of children's work are also incorporated into each child's 'Learning Journey' and the 2 Simple assessment tool, as examples of children's achievement and are regularly shared with parents.

The Reception Teacher and the Pre-school leader meet regularly to discuss the future needs of children moving into Reception in order to ensure a smooth transition into Reception Class and to enable the class teacher to plan for their developmental needs.

Pupil Progress meetings are regularly held with the Head teacher to track the progress of Reception children throughout the year and implement intervention strategies where necessary. Assessment information for Reception children is collated and stored on Classroom Monitor and the Pupil Progress Tracker. At the end of the Reception year, this data is collated and submitted to the L.A. and reported to parents. The information also enables the Year 1 teacher to plan for all of their children for the forthcoming year.

Parents of Reception children also receive an annual report in July each year. It makes specific reference to the Characteristics of Effective Learning for each individual child.

10. The role of parents

Parents are the child's first educators and have a very important role to play in their child's education. We believe that to achieve good working relationships with parents we need to:

- 10.1 Talk to parents about their child before he/she start school.

- 10.2 Visit all children in their nursery setting prior to their starting school.
- 10.3 Provide opportunities for the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school – i.e. new starter days and by the Reception teacher regularly visiting our Pre-school and becoming a familiar face to the children.
- 10.4 Invite all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- 10.5 Offer parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class and share their child's Learning Journey.
- 10.6 Encourage parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- 10.7 Have flexible admission arrangements in the form of the option of part-time arrangements for the first week if parents prefer.
- 10.8 Offer a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents.
- 10.9 Provide various activities that involve parents and invite them to curriculum evenings, in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking.
- 10.10 Arrange a formal meeting for parents twice yearly at which they have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress with the teacher.

11. Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use safe, age appropriate materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

12. Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Governing Body and will be reviewed annually.

Signed by the Chair of Governors:

Date: