



We love and value each member of St. Mary's family as precious individuals. Our outward-looking curriculum enables everyone to embrace life in all its fullness while celebrating the everyday and the unique. Through our Christian values of belief, respect and friendship we: 'Shine as a Light in the World'.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY STATEMENT

Purpose of Document

This policy has been written to provide guidance and support on planning, teaching and assessment in the Foundation Stage at St Mary's CE First Academy.

Who is it for?

The whole staff and LAC have agreed the policy. A copy of the document is available in the academy office and will be accessible to visitors, support staff, LAC and parents.

Background and philosophy

The EYFS covers a wide span of development and needs to be met by a structured framework, which takes account of young children's aptitude to learn through different forms of activity, in particular through play. The EYFS framework places emphasis on major aspects of children's Communication and Language and their Physical and Personal Social Emotional development. At St Mary's CE First Academy & Nursery we aim to develop and educate the whole child, and therefore enrich all aspects of learning.

We aim to nurture the child's self-esteem and confidence, so that they realise that they are part of a group of people who value and respect each other. We develop a bond of trust and affection between staff and children, ensuring that all children and their families know who their key worker is. This in turn helps the child to feel confident, supported and assured, able to cope with life experiences as they grow and mature.

Each child is valued as an individual, with a contribution to make to his or her learning. Early childhood is a crucial stage of life when growth is both rapid and differential. It is a time when children particularly need high quality care and learning experiences. Through their experiences, we hope to develop independence and perseverance, as they progress and move forward. Young children learn most effectively when they are actively involved. Learning activities need to show links across the Prime and Specific areas of learning, as young children do not separate their learning into subjects.

Organisation

The Nursery and Reception Class are nearby, which greatly facilitates organisation, teaching and learning.

Nursery

The morning/afternoon session is staffed by qualified members of staff and in line with ratio requirements (1:8). Planning and day to day organisation is overseen by a qualified teacher. **There are three intakes throughout the year (September, January and April) for children to attend nursery the term after they have turned 3.**

The Nursery offers a full day option, where children are able to eat a packed lunch or hot dinner in the School Dining Room should they be attending morning and afternoon sessions. This is a paid for facility. **If your child is attending a morning or afternoon session, this is £13.60. If you require a full day session with a hot dinner provided by school, this is an extra £8.13. If you require a full day with a packed lunch, this is an extra £5.50. Funding is available depending on your child's age and your income, find out more using these links.**

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/check-eligible-free-childcare-if-youre-working>

Nursery children are supervised by a Play Worker at lunchtime on a 1:8 ratio. Where children are provided with school meals, snacks and drinks they are healthy, balanced and nutritious. Before the child is admitted to Nursery the Nursery Leader will obtain information about and special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies and any health requirements. Fresh drinking water will be made available and accessible at all times. The Nursery Leader will ensure that information provided by parents and carers will be acted upon.

Reception

The EYFS Foundation Stage continues into the Reception class, staffed by a qualified teacher. Pupils continue to learn from a carefully planned, appropriate curriculum, which enables them to achieve the Early Learning Goals and reach a Good Level of Development at the end of their Reception year.

Pupils in Nursery and Reception are very much part of main school and main school events. They are involved in worship, productions, special celebrations and Sports Day, as well as listening to visiting speakers and taking part in workshops, school visits i.e. the Pantomime, visits to Church, theatre presentations and fun days. All these things enrich the offered curriculum and help to develop cultural capital for our youngest children. Pupils in Reception class participate in main school playtimes and establish friendships across year groups with confidence.

Admissions

Children need to experience a happy, positive start to their formal education. We, as practitioners, must begin a partnership with children and their parents that will be lasting and effective. We place great emphasis on a successful induction process to the Foundation Stage for both children and parents at St Mary's.

Nursery induction process:

- A visit for children, allowing them to spend time in Nursery independently - 'Induction Session'.
- Meeting for parents where there is ample opportunity for questions to be asked and answered.
- Explanation by staff during the meeting of the curriculum and daily routine.
- Nursery prospectus given to parents as well as a Registration Form and Provisional Interest Form
- Staggered entry times and early collection to ease children in calmly.
- Transition meetings held with other settings.
- Getting to know you information.

- Each child will be assigned a Key Person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents.

Reception induction process:

- Familiarisation visits for pupils
- Induction Day
- Evening Induction meeting for parents where there is ample opportunity for questions to be asked and answered.
- Explanation by YR teacher during the meeting of the EYFS curriculum.
- School prospectus given to parents.
- Issue of additional 'starting school' information.
- Transition meetings held with other settings.
- Identification of key worker for each child.

The Framework

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS Framework is based on the seven areas of learning and development, as identified by The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Prime Areas:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

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

The statutory Early Learning Goals set out what is expected for most children by the end of the Reception year (ELG2). However, it is recognised that some children may not reach the goals (ELG1).

The EYFS curriculum consists of long, medium and short term plans based on the Early Years Foundation Stage Development Matters and is guided by children's interests. Staff in the EYFS meet frequently to plan assess and evaluate the curriculum.

Learning and Teaching

Activities are planned to encourage the child's natural curiosity and give them the chance to explore, experiment and become immersed in their learning. Well planned, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led, adult-initiated and child-initiated activities with appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process and help them to make

progress. Differentiation can be by task or outcome, investigative questions can take a child further along their own learning pathway.

We aim to create an inspiring and motivating curriculum and provision that is accessible for all individuals through quality planning based on observations of the children's needs and interests. We promote high engagement through a range of broad topics which will include teacher directed activities for children to learn skills and concepts and a variety of child led activities where children can choose to enable them to develop, scaffold and embed their learning with their peers.

The needs of the children and learning styles are encouraged by using both the indoor and outdoor provisions. All resources are placed on shelves/in trays so they are accessible at all times for children to choose where to go, what to use and how to use it.

All early years' staff will have a good understanding of how children learn and develop and will be able to recognise that learning can take place at any time of the day. Learning opportunities will be encouraged further through high-quality questioning and modelling.

The use of 'dojo' allows staff to update parents throughout the day as to what and how the children are learning to enable parents to be involved in their school journey further.

Pupil Premium

Pupil Premium children within Nursery are identified and offered additional support with phonics, support in maths and intervention / 1:1 work. Pupil Premium children may also be considered for free school meals if appropriate. This will assist with progression through the age bands. In Reception, Pupil Premium children are discussed as part of termly Pupil Progress meetings.

Assessment, reporting and monitoring.

It is a statutory requirement to assess pupils against the Early Years Framework Early Learning Goals at the end of their academic year in Reception.

At St Mary's, ongoing assessment is an essential part of the learning and development process. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement and interest, these observations are then used to shape further planning and record in children's 'Learning Journeys'.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). These will allow staff to assess their entry level and plan for children's progression.

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 (expected)
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

Nursery staff begin this process by recording progress in ages and stages through all areas of learning from entry to the Nursery via the children's individual learning journey tracking sheet. This information is monitored and transferred to Reception staff and continues the learning journey through to the end of the EYFS, where reports and outcomes of achievements are made and shared with parents and the Year One teacher. In addition, a report is written on each child outlining their individual characteristics of learning. This is completed by formal/informal observations and staff professional judgement.

Parents are invited into school for a discussion each term. Written reports on progress are given at the end of a child's time in Nursery. Reception parents receive termly reports in addition to the end of the year reports (July).

EYFS pupils have targets (Next Steps) which are identified and agreed with parents as an area for development.

Monitoring is carried out in line with the school's monitoring cycle. Discussion follows these sessions and in this way we are able to maintain the quality of learning and teaching.

The role of the EYFS Co-ordinator

Ensures high standards are maintained and that the EYFS curriculum is delivered effectively by all practitioners.

- Liaise with Nursery staff regarding child's progress and transition to Reception.
- Support Nursery staff with planning, and evaluation of EYFS curriculum.
- Oversee good transition between Nursery and Reception.
- Attend relevant training re EYFS and organises any training for staff.
- Report back 'Best Practice' following visits to outstanding providers of Nursery and Early Years' settings.
- Report to the Head of School or Executive Headteacher on progress of EYFS.
- Report to LAC.
- Work with Nursery Manager and Head of School on resources, publicity and marketing issues.
- Liaise with outside agencies where necessary and appropriate.
- Review, updates and shares relevant policies.
- Creates, reviews and manages an EYFS action plan and shares developments with the Head of School and Executive Principal.

Working with parents

We recognise that parents are the first educators of a child's life and we value the contributions they make to the children's journeys. We recognise the role that parents have played and will continue to play in the future. We do this through:

- Talking to parents/carers before they start school.
- Supporting children with their transition from nursery to Reception; class teachers visit or communicate with the feeder nurseries where applicable, to meet the children and discuss their progress and needs.
- Inviting parents to induction meetings during the term before their child is due to start.
- Inviting parents to workshops and book looks throughout the year to detail how we work with the children and see the outcomes of their learning.
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if they have any concerns. There are three formal parent meetings throughout the academic year to which the parents and teachers can discuss the child's progress in private. Parents will also receive reports on their child's attainment and progress.
- Providing opportunities for parents to celebrate and share their child's learning and development by coming into for different events.
- Sending out regular updates through 'dojo' which includes photos of learning within school, activities that can be done at home and a celebration of achievements within the class.

Equal Opportunities, Safeguarding

Activities both within and outside the classroom are planned in a way that encourages full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability or gender, disability, ability, social background, language or ethnicity.

Every effort is made to ensure that activities are equally interesting to both boys and girls. Children with special needs are given additional support. This may be through extra adult help or by devising appropriate activities to meet their needs whilst ensuring progression. High achievers are given extension activities as appropriate to develop deeper knowledge and understanding.

Staff are aware of the regulations set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2015 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, and take all reasonable steps to ensure that no member of the school community is treated less favourably because of disability.

At all times and in all circumstances, teachers and other staff are responsible for safeguarding the welfare of all pupils. When planning EYFS activities, teachers must ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed.

Health and Safety

Within the Foundation Stage, whether in the classroom or on visits, the guidelines set out in the Health and Safety Policy will be strictly followed.

Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually in the Spring Term, and adapted as appropriate in line with developments and initiatives.

Updated annually in Spring Term

Signed Chair of LAC

Date