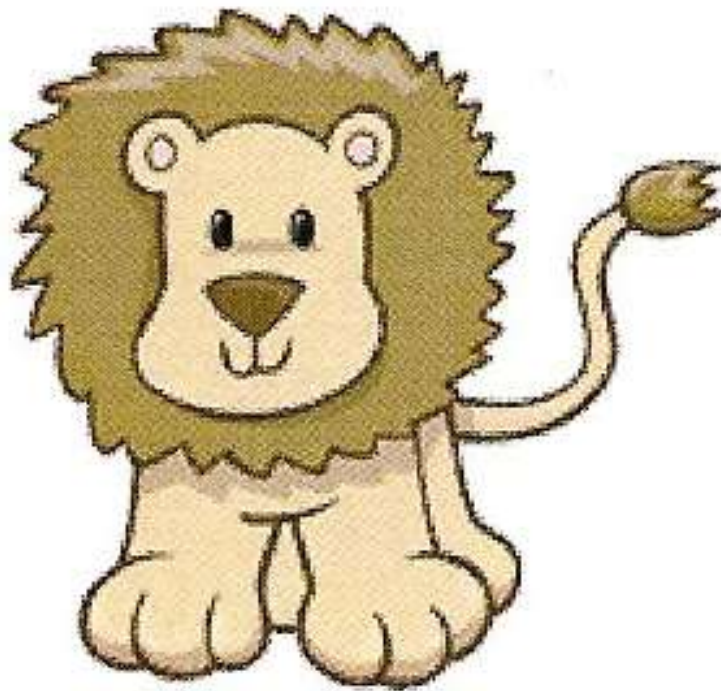


St Mark's Catholic Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Proudly and joyfully we Love, Live and Learn as God's Children

Aims of the Foundation Stage

We are guided by the following principles of the EYFS:

1. To support and nurture **The Unique child** – every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
2. To establish **Positive Relationships**- Our children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
3. To develop **Enabling Environments** – The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning.
4. To safeguard **Learning and Development** – Our children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and interconnected.

Characteristics of our young learners

Young children need active exploration and opportunities for investigation from which they can draw their own conclusions. They are constantly learning new skills, acquiring knowledge which enables them to make sense of the world. Children have a natural curiosity and zest for life and for them discovery takes place in both the indoor and outdoor environment. It is equally important that our children acquire positive dispositions and attitudes to learning that will form the basis for lifelong learning.

Play

We regard play as being fundamental to our children’s development and this is how the children learn in the EYFS. Activities are provided for the children to access through play and through this child initiated learning is where the class staff provide children with their next steps of learning as well as questioning in order to challenge them.

Accommodation

The Reception unit is within the main school. It is open plan and caters for a class of 30 children. There is an outdoor area specifically designed and designated for use by Reception children, including a soft surfaced area directly outside the classroom promoting outdoor role play, a planting area, sandpit, water area and a role play area. The Early Years has its own entrance, cloakroom and toilet facilities.

Admission

An induction meeting in the summer term provides an opportunity for parents to meet the teachers, children to visit the classrooms and look at the resources available. Policies of the school are explained and practical information is given about school meals, uniforms and all induction procedures. Prior to this we also offer a session known as 'Rumble in the Jungle' which allows parents and children to meet each other, become familiar with the school and engage in some fun activities with their new class teachers and friends.

Staffing

The Reception class benefit from a class teacher and one Teaching Assistant. Extra help is sometimes provided by students and volunteers. All students and volunteers hold up to date DBS certificates.

Classroom Management and Organisation

In the EYFS a variety of teaching styles and techniques are used. Free flow activities which are child initiated go on alongside group work initiated by adults. Sometimes the children are taught as a whole class in short bursts of learning. All children are encouraged to participate fully in all activities and there are sometimes when children are supported in their activities and others when they are expected to work independently. At the beginning of the year children work and play in mixed ability groups, with staff being aware of varying levels of development within the group. After baseline assessments are completed, the children are then placed into phonics groupings and will work in ability groups for Mathematics and Literacy activities. They will be encouraged to become independent in their learning selected tasks appropriate for their next steps and own learning journey. Whole class teaching is usually undertaken in the main classroom. Some children with particular needs are taught individually or in small intervention groups in a room to the side of the classroom or in the outdoor area. During work children are encouraged to engage in self-assessment where appropriate.

Teaching and Learning

Reception class share the same daily learning times as Key Stage One. The morning session runs from 8:45am – 12.00am; the afternoon runs from 1:15pm – 3:10pm. The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in the school policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage as well as teaching and learning in the rest of the school.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are as follows:

- The partnership between staff and parents to enable their children develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that staff have of how our children develop and learn and how this impacts on the way we teach them;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, make appropriate interventions, extend and develop play experiences;
- the carefully planned curriculum using the Developmental Matters guidance that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals and a Good Level of Development by the end of the Foundation Stage;

Proudly and joyfully we Love, Live and Learn as God's Children

- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and resources for activities indoors and outdoors;
- the identification through observations, of children's progress and next steps in learning which are regularly shared with parents;
- the regular identification of training needs for all staff working in the Foundation Stage;
- the regular monitoring of our work and what we are trying to achieve, in order to improve.

Admissions

Admission to the Reception class strictly follows the admission process and policy of the school. The Reception class has a maximum of 30 children. In the first week of the autumn term, class staff complete home visits in order to assist the transition into the school environment. Children then gradually build their time up over the first few days at school and are usually attending full time by the second week. Before starting Reception the children will have visited the school for our "Rumble in the Jungle" afternoon and transition morning, where the children spend some time in the class familiarising themselves with their surroundings. On arrival to school parents drop off their children at the Reception door which is accessible through the main playground. Parents may stay for a brief time in the cloakroom area if their child is unsettled, however, this is not encouraged for any great length of time as this can exasperate the separation process.

The Curriculum

Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the seven areas of learning identified in the Developmental Matters Guidance. The Curriculum areas consist of 3 Prime areas and 4 Specific areas as follows:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development.
- Communication & Language.
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Read Write Inc guidance for teaching phonics is used in Reception. Where children excel with phonic knowledge they may access the teaching of set 3 sounds through integration with Year One pupils for short phonic sessions. Much of the learning planned in Reception is through play and first hand activities both indoors and outdoors. By the end of the Reception year teaching and learning is more adult led than child led to help ensure a smoother transition into Year One. Medium term planning is completed and identifies the intended learning for children working towards the Early Learning Goals. Weekly Planning identifies in more detail the learning outcomes for children. Individuality and independence are fostered and we try to help each child achieve their full potential.

Proudly and joyfully we Love, Live and Learn as God's Children

Assessment

The FSP (Foundation Stage Profile) is the national requirement for the assessment of children at the end of the Reception year. Evidence for this assessment is based on observations and evidence recorded by practitioners. Assessments are made on an ongoing basis throughout the year using 'Evidence Me' on the Reception class iPads and summative assessments made half termly or sooner using the whole school system 'SIMS' using development matters.

During the first six weeks in Reception the teachers make a diagnostic baseline assessment to provide a comprehensive picture of the developmental stages the children have reached. References are made to the age related bands of the EYFS. The Reception teacher also evaluates assessments and reports from other Nurseries. If there are no reports the Reception teacher carries out her own assessments. Assessments inform the planning for teaching and learning during the year. This assessment process allows the children to be grouped by ability to partake in Mathematics and Literacy activities.

Individual observations focus on the 7 areas of the curriculum whilst the children are at play and during adult led activities. Children begin to take home reading books early on in the year and the children are provided with home school diaries so that parents may record their progress at home. To begin with many books will consist of pictures only and this allows the children to develop book language and story-telling skills. As the year progresses the children move through the reading levels. The books are high quality reading books which fit in with our Read Write Inc Programme following the teaching of phonics to allow the children to segment and blend words.

At the end of the final term children's profile results are sent to the LEA for analysis. Parents receive an annual report reflecting the results of the F.S.P., the children's characteristics of learning and also highlighting the child's strengths and developmental needs.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

All children in Reception, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, ability and disability are given equal access to, and encouraged to participate in all activities and achieve their full potential. They are exposed to a wide variety of stories, poetry, music, dance and play materials reflecting different cultures and nationalities. Diversity is celebrated in the school.

When planning for children's learning we take account of their different life experiences, their special needs, their abilities and disabilities and their diverse linguistic backgrounds. A wide variety of teaching strategies are employed based on knowledge of the different ways children learn in order to motivate and ensure the children make progress. We try to use resources that reflect diversity and avoid discrimination and stereotyping.

When a child has particular needs or difficulties, we seek the assistance of the SENDCo and outside agencies are contacted eg; school nurse, speech therapy, behaviour support, physiotherapy, Communication and Autism Team etc. The teacher, parent and SENDCo work together to produce a support plan for the child with special needs and these are reviewed at least termly. (Also see Equal Opportunities policy and SEND Policy)

Proudly and joyfully we Love, Live and Learn as God's Children

Partnership with Parents

We attempt to develop a good relationship with the children's parents, from the beginning of their association with the school and welcome information they give us about their child's development. Parents are invited to contribute their children's home experiences and help school build a more holistic picture of their child's development through daily dialogue either end of the school day, at Parents' Evening and communication through the home school diary. Early on in the school year parents are invited to attend workshops so that they may learn about how their child is taught at school and so that they have the opportunity to work alongside their child.

Homework

Reading books are provided so that parents may support their child in reading on a daily basis and record any comments in the home school diary. Homework is usually given weekly to develop skills in Mathematics and sound homework will be given daily for the children to practice and reinforce new learning in the initial stages. BugClub will be used to set reading books which match the children's phonics level and reading ability. We will also use EducationCity to set games to support the children's learning where appropriate. Please see the schools homework policy for more information.

Parental involvement

We have an open door policy here at St Mark's and welcome any comments, concerns or questions any parent has. Parents are warmly invited to join the St Mark's Friends association which thrives within the school and benefits all the children hugely. Parents who wish can also arrange to speak with the school's SENDCO, Head teacher or school nurse about any issues they have with their children.

Resources

Resources for the Foundation Stage are constantly reviewed and replaced when exhausted, outdated or broken. They are mainly stored within the Reception classroom. Children are encouraged to use them safely and with care, such as when working with scissors or large construction outside and when tidying away. Reception staff are responsible for the care and maintenance of the resources to ensure safety of children wherever possible.

Safeguarding and promoting our children's welfare

Our 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.

In order to ensure the above is fully evident in our school setting we have put together procedures, practices, and policies which should be followed by all school staff. Some have already been mentioned in this EYFS Policy. Please refer also to the following which are kept centrally in the school office:

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy (including risk assessment)

Proudly and joyfully we Love, Live and Learn as God's Children

- Home School agreements
- School Prospectus.
- Citizenship
- School complaint form
- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Education of children in Public Care
- Educational visit's Policy -including risk assessment
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Care and Control Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Homework Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Race Equality Policy
- R.E. Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- S.E.N.D Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras Policy

Wrap around care for children is available from 7:30am – 8:45am and after school 3:10p.m. – 6:15pm with Helping Hands. More information is available from the school office.

Adopted by Governors: **January 2021**
 Review Date: **July 2022**