



Saint Edmund's Catholic Primary School

'Together we learn and grow through worship and celebration'

EYFS Policy

Committee responsible for policy	Curriculum and Achievement Committee
Approved by Committee /FGB	Nov 2015
Statutory/Non-statutory	Non-Statutory
Frequency of Review	Free to determine – 3 years
Date of last review	September 2015
Date of next review	September 2018
Purpose of policy	To set out a framework within which staff can operate and give guidance on planning, teaching and assessment in the EYs
Consultation	All staff SLT Achievement Committee
Links to other policies	Planning Assessment and Marking Teaching and Learning

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

This policy reflects the school's values and philosophy in relation to the teaching and learning of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It sets out a framework within which staff can operate and gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. In partnership with parents and carers, we endeavour to ensure the children's "school readiness" and give them a "broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for future progress through school and life." (Statutory Framework, EY, 2014)

The Early Years (EY) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St Edmund's, children join the Nursery class in the academic year that they turn four and children start Reception in the academic year that they turn five.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
2. Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming confident and independent.
3. Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child
4. Learning and developing – an acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

In the EYs we aim to provide:

- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning
- A secure foundation of knowledge
- A strong partnership with parents
- Equal opportunities for all children
- A safe, happy and enjoyable environment where children feel valued, loved and secure and able to share their feelings and concerns.

The Early Years support the seven areas of learning and development:

Prime Areas	17 Early Learning Goals
1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Making relationships
	Self-confidence and Self Awareness
	Managing Feelings and Behaviour
2. Physical Development	Moving and Handling
	Health and Self Care
3. Communication and Language	Listening and Attention
	Understanding
	Speaking
Specific Areas	
4. Literacy	Reading
	Writing
5. Maths	Number
	Shape, Space and Measures
6. Understanding the World	People and Communities
	The World
	Technology
7. Expressive Arts and Design	Exploring and Using Media and Materials
	Being Imaginative

The teaching in the EYFS also encourages three characteristics of effective learning which underpin the learning and development in all areas and supports the child to remain an effective and motivated learner:

3 Characteristics of Effective Learning	
1. Playing and exploring – engagement	Finding out and exploring Playing with what they know Being willing to “have a go”
2. Active learning – motivation	Being involved and concentration Keeping trying Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
3. Creating and critically – thinking	Having their own ideas Making links Choosing ways to do things

Practitioners reflect on the three characteristics of effective learning and ensure that the classroom stimulates “playing and exploring, active learning, creativity and thinking critically.”

Aims

At St Edmund’s the Foundation Stage is the first year in a school environment. Children will experience a broad and balanced curriculum based on the seven areas of learning, which are also underpinned by our Catholic identity and British Values. Our aim is for the children to become independent and autonomous learners over the course of the Foundation Stage. Activities are planned to provide a stimulating learning experience for the children where they can explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. Children’s own needs, interests and learning styles are taken into account and they work at their own pace.

Planning and Organisation

Planning is based around the seven areas of learning using the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014). Medium term and weekly plans link directly to the ages and stages of the child. Learning outcomes are cross-referenced to the activities planned, ensuring a comprehensive progression towards the Early Learning Goals while providing opportunities for teacher assessment through structured activities at the end of the Reception year.

Plans are developed to ensure:

- There is strong evidence of cross-curricular links and hands-on learning wherever possible.
- There is specific reference to the learning opportunities provided in the Outdoor Classroom.
- There is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.
- Children work in a variety of ways: independently, in groups or pairs and as a whole class.
- All children have access to the areas of learning both inside and outside the classroom
- Learning and development opportunities are planned around the needs and interests of the children and are assessed and reviewed constantly
- Practitioners work in partnership with parents/carers

The teaching of reading and writing:

- Phonics is taught from early in the Autumn Term in both Nursery and Reception.
- The Reception children are initially given individual sounds, which they take home to form part of a programme of integrated learning between school and home.
- In the second part of the autumn term the children take home the Reception key words for reinforcement at home. Nursery children begin to take home one sound a week in the spring term.
- Early reading includes sharing books and the children begin to progress through a reading scheme when they enter reception.

Assessment, Record Keeping, Reporting and Target Setting

In line with the Foundation Stage ethos most assessment is formative. This is ongoing and carried out by the teacher and Nursery Nurse/Teaching Assistant who work in close partnership. Anecdotal evidence, contributed by parents and other adults in the school is considered valuable assessment material. This informs planning and target setting. Some summative teacher assessment is carried out by way of observation, either 1-1 with pupils or in small groups. A profile (or Learning Journey) is kept for each child and contains exemplary annotated work that can be used as evidence, along with photos to support teacher assessment and judgements; the teacher and Nursery Nurse/Teaching Assistant collect evidence for this. Learning journeys include a range of evidence that incorporate both adult-led, child-initiated activities and a variety of observations.

Group and individual targets are set, which represent the high expectations that the practitioners have but which are regularly revised to provide realistic, achievable goals for the children. These targets can be in any of the seven areas of learning but there is a constant focus on the importance of Personal, Social and Emotional Development; individual and class targets are set in this area from the autumn term.

Every child is assessed termly against the seven areas of learning and development and these levels are tracked. During the summer term, each Reception child's level of development is assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting 'expected' levels of development, if they are 'exceeding' expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). If children have met the 'expected' level of development in the 7 prime areas of learning, they are assessed as having achieved a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). This is usually at the end of the Reception year and should be noted that not all children will be at this stage. Levels are shared with parents in the form of their end of year reports.

Equal Opportunities

All children have equal access to the Foundation Stage curriculum and resources, regardless of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. Displays and references show positive role models of age, gender, race, ethnicity, disability and social circumstance. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEND)

All children and their families are valued at St Edmund's Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of sources, to ensure that any child with a potential special educational need is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial in enabling staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school's Inclusion Manager is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are then taken in accordance with the school's SEND Code of Practice.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:

The first of the seven areas of learning is Personal, Social and Emotional Development and it is through activities planned in this aspect of the Curriculum that practitioners nurture the confidence and social skills of the pupils. Through topic work, the children learn about their immediate environment and the world spiralling outwards from this starting point. Religious Education is taught in the Early Years through the 'Come and See' programme of study. The needs and beliefs of others are discussed, recognised and valued; ensuring children have a concept of the world beyond their own. Children are encouraged to understand the need for class and school rules and they are guided in making choices based on this knowledge; thus gaining a further understanding of right and wrong. Good behaviour is modelled by all adults (please see the Behaviour Policy).

Positive Relationships

At St Edmund's we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

'Parents as Partners'

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents will have played, and their future role, in educating their children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child's experiences before their child starts school.
- Giving the children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transition sessions.
- Inviting Reception parents to an induction meeting prior to starting school, an pre-school information evening and again through a taster session with their child.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns before or after school.
- Providing each child with a home/school communication book to communicate daily messages.
- Inviting parents to a formal meeting twice a year at which the teacher and the parents discuss the child's progress and new learning targets.
- Providing parents with a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Ensuring that staff in the EYs provide a range of opportunities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents: stay and play sessions, class assemblies, school visits, and parent workshops

Health and Safety

At St Edmund's, there are clear procedures for assessing risk which include procedures for keeping children safe during off-site activities. Children's medical and dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required. Fresh drinking water is available at all times. Children are offered fruit and milk at specific times during the day. (See whole school Health & Safety Policy for further details).

Safeguarding

In accordance with current legislation for all schools, should any concerns arise regarding child protection – including radicalisation - then we will seek advice from the appropriate authority. All staff have received Child Protection and PREVENT training. All EY staff and volunteers follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (please see separate policy).

Transition

From Pre-school /Nursery settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Nursery or Reception classes, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition:

- Children and parents are invited to a 'stay and play' session in nursery so that the child can familiarise themselves with their new surroundings.
- Children already attending St Edmund's nursery will already have visits from and be able to visit their new Reception teachers as outlined above.
- In the autumn term their new teachers visit all Nursery and Reception children in their homes.
- Reception children are encouraged to complete an "all about me" sheet. It is used during the autumn term to support transition and to inform planning.
- Children requiring extra support may receive additional visits in their pre-school settings but these will be on an individual basis and pre-planned.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EY Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities; their progress against expected levels and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observations, which are passed on.

Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The purpose of monitoring and evaluation activities is to raise the overall quality of teaching and levels of pupil attainment. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator monitors planning, children's work and teaching on a regular basis. The Senior Management Team oversees the work of the co-ordinator and also carries out monitoring activities in line with the school's policy for monitoring.

The Foundation Stage is also monitored by the Governing Body through the work of the Curriculum and Achievement Committees.