



# St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School

## Teaching and Learning Policy

### Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday.

The EYFS is statutory and is detailed under the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* and the *Practical Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage*.

## INTENT

At **St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School**, we greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's readiness for the next stage of their education and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

We follow the statutory framework and guidance detailed in the EYFS and using our extensive experience we observe, plan and teach children in early years.

- We aim to make the child's first experience of school happy, positive and fun.
- We aim to foster a love of learning and develop enquiring minds.
- We aim to instil the characteristics of effective learning such as independence, resilience, and confidence.
- We aim to promote emotional well-being
- We aim to build positive relationships and work in partnership with families (recognising that parents are their child's first and foremost educator), carers and professionals to support every child to develop and learn.

## **IMPLEMENT**

### **Teaching in the EYFS:**

- Has a carefully planned curriculum which aims for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS.
- Involves creating adult and child-initiated opportunities that will encourage children to explore, create, investigate, rehearse, practise, repeat and discover.
- Involves developing characteristics of effective learning.
- Uses a multi-sensory, fun play-based approach where possible and appropriate.
- Shows awareness of the different ways and rates by which children develop and learn; that there are many factors affecting achievement including ability, emotional state, age and maturity, and how this informs teaching strategies.
- Has a high expectation of children's behaviour and attainment.
- Recognises the importance of emotional well-being.

### **Learning in the EYFS**

- Through a comprehensive induction and transition programme from a child's F1 setting to F2 we ensure prior learning and development is valued and the transition into school is supported.
- We encourage cross-curricular links to ensure a seamless transition into Key Stage One by building on previous experiences and planning those for the future.

In the EYFS children are learning when they: -

- Collaborate and learn from one another through shared experiences
- Are supported to set their own challenges in their physical environment and in their learning
- Access resources independently
- Use their senses to explore and investigate
- Develop persistence and positive attitudes to learning as detailed in the characteristics of effective learning.

### **Learning through play in the EYFS**

We highly value play and the learning it brings in itself. Anyone who has observed play for any length of time will recognise that, for young children, play is a tool for learning.

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules thereby developing emotional resilience and self-regulation.

Children have the opportunity to think creatively and problem solve alongside others. They express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations as well as re-enact positive experiences building self-awareness and self-esteem.

### **Inclusion in the EYFS**

We work collaboratively with parents/carers and the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) for children who may experience barriers to their learning, which may relate to sensory or physical impairment, learning difficulties or emotional or social development in line with the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice (2014) and the school's SEN/Inclusion Policy.

We aim to meet the needs of all our children by: -

- Setting realistic and challenging expectations. We aim for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS. We achieve this by planning for different learning styles, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities or medical

needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds as well as children with diverse linguistic backgrounds.

- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contributions of all children are valued.
- Using resources, which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping which all children have equal access to.
- Monitoring children's progress and providing support where necessary, within the resources available to the school. This may include a phased transition programme dependant on a child's specific SEN needs.
- Providing specific targets detailed in Individual Support Plans (ISP) and following external therapy or support programmes of work such as Speech and Language.
- Working collaboratively with families or carers, the SENCo and other professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists and Parent Support Advisor.
- Ensuring a balance across classes, within each cohort, of gender, ability, children with additional learning or medical needs and summer born children.
- Acknowledging the wishes of parents and carers of twins and multiple birth siblings regarding class allocation in the EYFS. Following discussions with parents and carers the school's usual practice is for twins and multiple birth siblings to be allocated to separate classes in Reception.

### **The EYFS Curriculum**

The EYFS is statutory and is important as a basis for developing essential skills such as listening, speaking, persistence and collaborating with each other. The three prime areas cover the knowledge and skills which are the foundations for future progress, and which are applied and reinforced by the specific areas. All areas of learning are equally important and are interlinked.

We follow The Development Matters (last updated 2021) document and the Early Learning Goals guide for our long-term planning together with the termly topics.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must inform our curriculum. These are split into two sections - prime and specific; however, all the sections are interconnected and important.

The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

Communication and language	Listening, attention and understanding Speaking
Physical development	Gross motor skills

	Fine motor skills
Personal, Social and Emotional Development.	Self-regulation Managing self Building relationships

The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

Literacy	Comprehension Word reading Writing
Mathematics	Number Numerical patterns
Understanding the World	Past and Present People, Culture and Communities The Natural World
Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with Materials Being Imaginative and Expressive

The Early Learning Goals (ELGs) above are not used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development. The ELGs are used to support us to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development and their readiness for Year 1. Activities are planned alongside our curriculum to reflect children's interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.

We use Cornerstones Curriculum to inform our termly plans. Medium term planning is completed half termly and identifies the intended learning outcomes.

Weekly Planning focuses on day-to-day organisation of adult led and independent activities. It considers that children's learning is not necessarily sequential and that they may need time to consolidate, repeat and extend their learning in their own way. All planning is evaluated on an on-going basis and adapted in response to the children's needs and interests.

### **Assessment in the EYFS**

During the children's first half term in Reception, the teacher assesses each child's development and learning attainment against the criteria set out in Development Matters 2021 and the Early Learning Goals. It is also a time for the teacher to discover the unique personality and interests of each child.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure future planning reflects individual or group needs. Once a term,

formative assessments are carried out and discussed during Performance Management meetings.

Formative assessment in the Foundation Stage is continuous and examples of child-initiated work, whole class experiences and lessons are evidenced in large floor books.

Children complete weekly learning tasks in writing, maths and RE books as well as reading Practice groups 3 x per week and daily phonics lessons using Little Wandle Letters and Sounds revised.

Regular termly parents' meetings take place to ensure parents/carers are informed of their child's progress and next steps in learning. In addition to parents' meetings in the Autumn and Spring terms, parents receive an annual report that offers detailed comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and developmental needs. The children are also given opportunities to comment on areas they would like to improve.

## **Reflection in the EYFS**

We use audits and surveys to reflect on our practise. This enable us to keep improving our practise and keep asking questions. (June 2021)

We use an Early Years Setting evaluation sheet (June 2021) to record notes around the 3 I's; Intent, Implementation and Impact during periods of reflection which has been developed using the Early years Inspection Framework (2019). This enables us to evaluate our aims, the quality of our education, the behaviour and attitudes of children, personal development of children and our own leadership and management.

We also ask parents for their feedback.

## **Working with Parents/ carers and other significant adults i.e. childminders**

We recognise the importance of working alongside parents and other significant adults during a child's education. We do this through: -

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Giving the children the opportunity to spend several mornings or afternoons with their teacher before starting school.
- Inviting new parents into the classroom in their child's first term to take part in Foundation activities.
- Providing formal meetings for parents during the school year to discuss children's progress.
- Welcoming parents to discuss any concerns with the teacher and/or teaching assistants.
- Working to build good relationships with families to promote a regular two-way flow of information.
- Send out surveys to parents.

## **The Environment and Resources in the EYFS**

A rich and varied 'enabling' environment is actively planned for and continuously developed with varied multi-cultural and inclusive resources to encourage exploratory play-based learning and challenge. The learning environment encompasses both indoor and outdoor provision. We encourage children to explore their own selection of activities balanced with adult initiated activities.

# IMPACT

- The number of children in Reception who reach the ELG by the end of the academic year is in line or above national average.
- Children develop the characteristics of effective learning which helps them through the rest of their school career.
- Children develop the ability to manage risks.
- Children enjoy being independent in managing themselves and their learning.
- 100% of parents are happy with their child's progress.
- Parents feel part of the school community.
- Practise is improved year on year.
- Everyone is included.
- Children have high levels of wellbeing and involvement.

Date of review: February 2023

Reviewed by: Joanne Coakley

