



"The glory of God is  
a human being fully alive!"

# ST ETHELBERT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

## Curriculum Statement and Policy for Early Years 2020

Date of Review: February 2020  
Date of Next Review: February 2021

### Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

## **Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association

## **Structure of the EYFS**

Our Nursery offers a three-hour session in either the morning or the afternoon. Hours are 8.45am-11.45am or 12.30pm – 3.30pm

Reception pupils follow a full-time timetable from 8.50am to 3.20pm. Children either bring a packed lunch or select a school dinner. There is no charge to parents for a school dinner; these are covered by the universal free school meals funding.

## **Curriculum Statement and Policy for Early Years**

Early years education is all about feeding children's curiosity and ensuring that they have a wide range of experiences that lead them to ask questions about the world around them. Our curriculum is devised to tap into children's interests and responds to their interests. By giving learning a purpose and application, skills for reading, writing and solving mathematical problems will become meaningful and set in a context that children can relate to. The ability to solve simple problems, notice patterns, tell stories, communicate in writing, or make a cake by measuring the correct ingredients are the rewards of learning essential skills and are often practised in imaginative play.

The outdoor and indoor areas of the Nursery and the Reception area are the continuation of the indoor class space. The play that goes on both inside and outside is part of learning and the activities planned by adults are there to challenge and stimulate children; to make them want to learn more.

Learning to learn is a vital part of the curriculum. Understanding how we learn best is a key skill for adults and is something that we will help children identify from an early age. This includes learning to work alongside others to create and improve ideas. Helping children to be resilient, resourceful and reflective will be part of the school's ethos as the children move from year to year.

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile:**

The curriculum is divided into 7 areas:

Three 'prime' areas

- Communication and language (CL)
- Physical development (PD)
- Personal, social and emotional development (PSED)

Four 'specific' areas

- Literacy

- Maths
- Understanding the world (UW)
- Expressive arts and design (ED).

Children in Nursery begin by focusing on the first three areas (called the prime areas) and their learning gradually branches out into the other areas (specific areas). This document can be accessed via the Department of Education website or by asking the school office for a copy.

The 7 areas are broken down again so that parents can see how well their child is doing in relation to their age. At the end of Reception, each area has a set of Early Learning Goals against which children's readiness for the next stage of schooling (Key Stage 1) will be evaluated.

The teachers' job is to create meaningful experiences and activities that enable children to practice and develop in each of the areas. Children will be encouraged to take the initiative for their learning and make choices that help them strengthen areas they feel less confident about while being challenged in their favoured areas of learning.

## **Reading, Writing and Maths:**

Teaching phonics (the breakdown of the sounds used to create words) is taught using the Read, Write, Inc. scheme. This is a systematic approach to teaching all the sounds and corresponding ways to write these sounds. Children learn to blend sound together to read words

We use reading books from a variety of reading schemes to support the development of reading. We also hold regular phonics and reading workshops to support parents' understanding of how we teach children to read. Pupils in Reception take a reading book home to share with parents every week.

In addition, reading for pleasure is highly prioritized. Pupils hear stories, rhymes and songs every day and are encouraged to join in with repetitive phrases and recognise favourite characters and stories. High quality children's fiction is shared with the children as an ongoing approach to fostering a love of reading.

Children are always encouraged to practise mark-making/writing in a range of contexts. Many opportunities are given for independent mark-making and writing. This develops an enjoyment of writing as well as demonstrating the need to master the skill of writing in order to communicate. Letter formation is taught using the Read, Write, Inc scheme. Pupils are taught to 'segment' words into sounds to help spell them using their phonic knowledge.

Maths skills are taught daily in direct teaching sessions which include counting, practical problems and checking answers. We also sing lots of songs together to help children develop their understanding of number and 1:1 correspondance. Correct number formation is also emphasized through whole class teaching and regular practice. Other opportunities for mathematical understanding are developed across different areas of the classroom; for example, measuring and use of capacity will be explored in the water area, sand area or in other messy play areas as appropriate.

## **Learning through play**

We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Play can be enjoyable and challenging. When playing, children behave in different ways. Sometimes, their play will be lively and excited, sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing, and sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play. Through play, children will be developing skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

In a secure environment with effective adult support, children will be able to,

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk to rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems
- Express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

Adults in the setting will support play by:

- Planning and resourcing a stimulating environment
- Supporting children's learning through planned play
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play.
- Listening to all forms of children's communication and their ideas and taking these into account when developing play and planning.
- Narrating children's play.
- Asking questions about children's play.

## **Equality of opportunity in the Early Years**

**The Academy Committee and staff are committed to ensuring that our school is an inclusive community which promotes equality of opportunity.**

**We aim:**

- To ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, religion, culture, family background, disability, gender, home language, special educational needs or ability.
- To ensure that all the children feel secure, included and valued.
- To establish feelings of respect and trust with all children and their parents or carers.
- To treat each child as an individual and provide equality of opportunity
- To encourage self-confidence and a positive approach to learning in all children.
- During the school visit we will talk to the child and the parents about the child's ethnic, religious and cultural heritage and experiences at home. Staff will use this information when planning and carrying out activities within the Foundation area to ensure that familiar experiences are used as starting points for learning.
- When planning, setting up and altering the rooms, outdoor areas, displays and equipment, the staff will aim to create an environment that encourages a positive attitude to learning. This will include:
  - Keeping the environment free from any discriminatory practice or stereotypical images
  - Valuing the local community and environment as a source of learning opportunities
  - Using displays, resources and equipment that reflect the community in which the children live as well as the wider world.

The curriculum will include activities to encourage children to respect their own cultural background and beliefs and those of other people. These will include:

- Activities relating to a wide range of religious, ethnic and cultural festivals
- Telling stories, listening to music and looking at pictures and videos from a range of cultures and religions as well as those from the Catholic faith
- Role play activities that reflect a variety of cultures and traditions
- Discussions with and between the children about the similarities and differences in their experiences and the reasons for those similarities and differences.

We will ensure that all children are given support to participate in activities, experiences, visits and discussions and to ensure that all children are listened to carefully and with respect. We will carefully consider the need for equality of opportunity when planning activities and experiences. When necessary we will modify activities or provide additional equipment or materials to ensure children are

not excluded. Parents are encouraged to talk to their child's class teacher or Early Years Lead if they have any questions regarding equality of opportunity in the provision.

## **Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

St. Ethelbert's is an inclusive school and works to ensure that the needs of all pupils are being met where possible. Children with special educational needs will be given the support they need through discussion with parents or carers and, where necessary, in cooperation with external experts and advisors.

Parents/carers are advised to look at the school's policy for Special Educational Needs as well as the SEND report. Both of these documents are reviewed annually and are approved by the Academy Committee. Copies are published on the school website and also available from the main office by request.

## **Learning at home:**

Parents often ask how they can help at home. The key thing is that children see that what they learn at home complements what they learn at school. It is important that the adults at school are working with the adults at home to support and encourage learning. Reading at home, talking about what has been learnt at school, and simple activities such as counting, puzzles, shopping, baking and taking an interest in their local environment will all support pupils' vocabulary development, language skills, gross and fine motor skills and confidence.

### **Parents/carers can also support with encouraging greater independence including:**

- Encouraging children to eat independently, including learning how to use a knife and fork
- Reminding your child to tell an adult if they need to go to the toilet
- Helping your child understand how to ask for help if they need
- Encouraging children to dress/undress themselves, including putting on and fastening their coat

## **Reporting:**

Parents will be kept up to date with children's progress through a variety of methods:

- Brief informal conversations can take place with the teacher and learning support staff at the start or at the end of the day.
- There are regular workshops and 'stay and play' sessions so parents can find out more about their child's learning.
- Parent consultation meetings are held in October and February.
- Records of achievement recorded on '2 Simple' are sent electronically to parents at the end of each term
- A progress report will be written for the end of each academic year. It will be possible to discuss this report at the end of the academic year.

A weekly letter is published on the school website to let parents know what children will be learning in the next week and this gives parents an opportunity to explore this at home in order to support their child's learning.

**The partnership between parents and teachers is vital. Therefore, parents who have any concerns about their child's progress should talk directly to the teacher at any time to organise a meeting**

## **Safeguarding and Child Protection:**

The Governing Body has policies and procedures in place to ensure that the safety, well-being and welfare of the pupils is of upmost priority. School policies are in place for:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Behaviour for Learning
- Staff Code of Conduct
- The Prevent Strategy

Staff within the Early Years will follow these policies. In addition, the following measures are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils in Early Years.

There is at least one member of Pediatric First Aid trained (2 day training) based in the Nursery and Reception provision.

- **The lead first aider for Reception is: Susan Dilley**
- **The lead first aider for Nursery is: Felicity Barlow**
- Where necessary further support can be requested from pediatric First Aid trained staff based outside of the provision. These members of staff are:
  - Maggie Brennan (Welfare and Parent Support Officer)
  - Sinead O'Leary (Office Manager)
  - Kerry Slattery (Pupil Wellbeing and Safeguarding Officer)
  - All other LSAs and HLTA are Paediatric First Aid trained
- All first aid incidents/accidents are recorded in the accident book held in reception and in Nursery. Parents will be informed by a member of EYFS staff at the end of the day if First Aid treatment has been administered. Where the First Aid trained member of staff makes a judgement that further medical attention is required or in the event of an emergency, the member of staff will follow whole school procedures regarding calling an ambulance and informing parents should that be required.

## **Key Workers**

The Early Years operates a key worker system.

The Key Person system became a statutory requirement for all Early Years settings following the revised EYFS framework in 2012. It means that a trained practitioner is named as the key worker for each child so they can then build a stronger relationship with the child and their parents. This helps children and parents to build trust with the setting and feel secure.

The key workers allocated to each child are displayed in the provision and parents will be informed at the start of the year which member of staff has been allocated to their child.

## **Health and Safety**

The health and safety of the provision is maintained and reviewed in accordance with the school health and safety policy. When pupils leave the provision to learn in another part of the school (e.g. a P.E lesson in the playground), the Early Years staff must ensure that pupils understand how to move safely around the school. Staff must also do a headcount of children leaving and then returning to the provision.

When children go on visits or trips outside of school, then a full risk assessment is completed in line with school policy. All school trips and risk assessments are authorised by the headteacher.