

ST VINCENT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

Review Date: May 2027

Mission Statement

Caritas Christi Urget Nos

The love of Christ urges us to care for each other and strive for excellence in everything we do.

ST VINCENT'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Please note that all whole-school policies also apply to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

St Vincent's recognises that positive learning experiences in the early years lay secure foundations for future learning and development. Teachers work within the Statutory Framework for the Early Years and plan using the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. The EYFS is based upon four principles which lay the foundations for our approach to teaching and learning: A unique child, positive relationships, enabling environments and learning and development.

Aims

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic wellbeing. We aim to support our pupils in achieving these outcomes. In addition, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child including those with additional or special needs.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Assess, monitor and evaluate learning and development regularly.
- Work in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions ensuring that all pupils are treated with equality.
- To use praise and encouragement as well as celebration and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning and good learning behaviours.

Learning and Development

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum provides an essential foundation for the National Curriculum. Learning and development in the EYFS is categorised into three **prime** areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

There are four specific areas of learning that practitioners plan for:

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

The children are encouraged to develop 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' in Reception which are: Playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically. Practitioners support children in their learning and development by asking questions and providing opportunities for children to access all areas of learning listed above.

The Classroom Environment

We aim to provide a rich and stimulating classroom environment, containing well-organised, appropriate and accessible resources. The continuous provision is carefully linked to the EYFS areas of development, children's needs and their personal interests. Risk assessments are carried out daily, of all indoor and outdoor areas.

Learning Through Play

Play is a powerful medium which strengthens and supports children's learning and development. Play underpins the whole EYFS for when children play, they are learning at the highest level. Through play, children develop language skills, their emotions and creativity, social and intellectual skills. For most children, play is natural and spontaneous however some children may need extra support from adults. The role of the adults in EYFS is crucial to supporting learning through play. Adults provide time, space and appropriate resources to facilitate play which inspires, promotes discovery and investigation and encourages a sense of wonder.

Practitioners will support children's learning through play by:

- Providing high quality planned experiences and purposeful activities for children's play that are both enjoyable and challenging.
- Providing opportunities for children to engage in self-initiated activities to facilitate rich and stimulating experiences.
- Setting up a range of self-directed and challenging activities which build on children's interests.
- Challenging and supporting through questions and prompts where appropriate.
- Use the children's prior experiences or interests to provide motivating activities for them.

Outdoor Learning

We aim to provide an environment which encourages outdoor learning through enabling free-flow between indoors and outdoors, with our outdoor classroom being an extension of the indoor environment. We believe outdoor learning is extremely important in supporting children's learning across all areas of the EYFS curriculum as well as their development of the Characteristics of Effective Learning. Some of the benefits of outdoor learning include:

- Supporting the development of a healthy and active lifestyle by providing

opportunities for physical activity and developing gross motor skills, freedom and movement, and promoting a sense of well-being.

- Offering experiences unique to the outdoors such as direct contact with the weather and seasons as well as the natural world.
- Developing an understanding and respect for nature, the environment and the interdependence of humans, animals, plants and life-cycles.
- Supporting development of problem-solving skills whilst nurturing creativity. Providing rich opportunities for developing imagination, inventiveness and resourcefulness.
- Providing space, both upwards and outwards, which is particularly important to those children who learn best through active movement. Outdoor spaces also enable children to engage in learning through sensory and physical experiences.
- Providing the freedom to explore, experiment and discover whilst promoting independence.
- Providing the opportunity to play safely and freely while they learn to assess risk, make calculated decisions and develop the skills they need to manage new situations. Thus, developing a 'can-do' attitude which will act as a solid foundation for all future learning.
- Learning that flows seamlessly between the indoors and outdoors which makes the most efficient use of resources as well as building on interests and enthusiasms.
- Providing an environment which promotes a sense of wonder and excitement that is generated when children actively engage with their environment.

The children also have the opportunity to attend Forest School based on the school premises.

Forest School sets learning in a different context for children where they can undertake a range of practical activities and carry out small achievable tasks. At Forest School children can develop their team working skills and also learn to become more independent. Those who are unfamiliar with woodlands and green spaces can become confident in using them and this can form the basis of a life-long relationship with natural spaces.

Assessment and Record Keeping

The progress and attainment of the children in EYFS is assessed in a variety of ways:

Baseline Assessments

Teachers complete a baseline assessment of each pupil from their observations, the standard baseline assessment and the information provided from previous settings and shared during transition meetings with parents/carers and children. The data is collated and used to inform planning, as well as to identify any additional needs specific children may have at the start of the academic year.

Foundation Stage Profile

The Foundation Stage Profile is an evidence-based record of each child's progress. Practitioners collect samples of work, written observations, photographs and videos as evidence. The profile is updated regularly and the results are submitted to the Local Authority in June.

Formative Observations

Practitioners undertake observations of children to inform planning and the Foundation

Stage Profile. These observations are recorded using Tapestry Learning Journals which ensure a home to school link.

Summative Reports

Parents/Carers receive a written report at the end of Reception which indicates if the child is emerging, expected or exceeding in their Early Learning Goals. It also provides a personalised review of how the child has shown the Characteristics of Effective Learning during their time in Reception. All reports include achievable and measurable targets for Literacy and Mathematics.

Role of the Early Years Co-Ordinator

- Implementing and reviewing the effectiveness of this policy, in conjunction with the Head Teacher and Leadership Team.
- Monitoring the progress of pupils in the EYFS and identifying areas of strength and those that require development using the profiles and working in conjunction with teachers to enable further progress.
- Providing INSET to staff on issues relating to this policy statement.
- Producing an annual 'Action Plan' that outlines strategies for improvements and developments in the Foundation Stage.

Communication and Concerns

- The Early Years operates an open-door policy so that communication between teachers and parents is transparent and for the benefit of the child.
- Parents who have further concerns are welcome to contact the Head Teacher.
- Parents who wish to contact Ofsted with their concerns may contact them directly on 0300 123 4666.

Monitoring and Evaluation of this policy

The Curriculum Committee will, in consultation with the Head teacher/Deputy Head teacher monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy. It will be reviewed at least every 2 years to ensure it reflects current practice.

Member of staff with Lead Responsibility for this policy:	Kerry Malone + Wellbeing Group
Date for Review:	May 2027