**Early Year’s Foundation Stage Policy**

“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” Mark 10:13-16

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We implement our mission statement by…

• Ensuring the transition into Early Years is successful and happy.

• Making the child’s first experience of school happy, positive and fun.

• Ensuring that all children feel secure and valued.

• Providing a broad and balanced curriculum incorporating well planned activities that cover the seven areas of learning of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

• Providing a rich and varied indoor and outdoor learning environment.

• Establishing positive relationships with parents.

• Valuing children’s interests and providing a balance of direct teaching and child initiated activities.

• Making careful observations and setting targets to support and extend children’s learning appropriately

• Helping children develop self-control and to respect the feelings, needs, cultures and abilities of others.

• Helping children develop a positive attitude towards good health and wellbeing, by encouraging healthy eating, drinking and exercise.

• Developing key skills in communication, literacy and numeracy that will prepare young children for Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

• Ensuring that children with special educational needs are identified and receive appropriate support.

• Liaising with external agencies in support of staff, pupils and parents to ensure that all pupils regardless of race, sex, disability or background have the opportunity to develop.

• Creating a partnership with parents to support and enhance their child’ development.

• To provide a positive transition into Year 1 and the onset of the National Curriculum.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012: Setting the standards for learning, development and care of children from birth to five.)

**The Curriculum**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of Early Years.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

• A Unique Child

• Positive Relationships

• Enabling Environments

• Learning and Development

**A Unique Child:**

At The Cathedral Catholic Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We also recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing circle times and reward stickers, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

**Positive Relationships:**

At The Cathedral Catholic Primary School 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.

**Enabling Environments:**

At The Cathedral Catholic Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children’s learning.

**The Learning Environment**

The EYFS learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is divided into area of continuous provision where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Reception has access to their own outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children’s development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

**Play**

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and pre occupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.” (Statutory framework for EYFS: 2012).

At The Cathedral Catholic Primary School we support children’s learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children’s learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves and modelling by example.

**Active Learning**

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

**Creativity and Critical Thinking**

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions (e.g. what, why, how). Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the setting to extend their learning.

**Areas of Learning**

The EYFS is made up of **three prime** areas of learning:

• Communication and language

• Physical development

• Personal, social and emotional development

**Four specific** areas of learning:

• Literacy

• Mathematics

• Understanding of the world

• Expressive arts and design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities.

**Starting in Early Years**

 **Admissions and induction procedures**

The transition to school begins in May. Parents are notified of the induction dates for their child during the second week of May**.** There is usually a parents meeting followed by three sessions for each child to attend. In addition staff either visit the new children at home or in their pre school setting (depending on which the parent prefers)

All Early Years children are admitted on a full-time basis at the beginning of the Autumn term. The six youngest children come in first and spend a couple of days doing their baseline assessments and getting to know the environment and staff. The next youngest six children join them on Day 3 when we will have 12 children in class. Every 2 days another 6 children arrive until the whole class is in school. This usually takes a couple of weeks.

• The Reception teacher will contact the setting where the child has experienced pre-school education and collate any necessary information from them that can help to paint a fuller picture of the child and where they are at.

**Reception to Year 1**

• During the last half term the children in reception will spend time with their new teacher in their new classroom on transition day. The Y1 classroom is right next door to Reception and very familiar to them.

• During the final term in Reception, the EYFS 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, their characteristics for learning and their readiness for Year 1.

• Each child’s level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are at the **expected** levels of development, if they are **exceeding** the expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels (**emerging**).

• 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 characteristics of 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.

**Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at The Cathedral Catholic Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. At our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We meet the needs of all our children through:

• Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.

• Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs.

• Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.

• Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.

• Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.

• Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.

•Monitor, assess and track children who may have a specific need such as SEN, EAL, AGT or a medical need.

• Monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary including having dialogues with outside agencies who may be able to offer us specific advice and support. It is important to us that all children in Early Years are ‘safe’. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See our Safeguarding Children Policy)

Any concerns regarding children in the EYFS should firstly be brought to the attention of the class teacher who will then bring to the attention of the EYFS leader and the Inclusion manager.

**Health and Safety**

At The Cathedral Catholic Primary School, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, an annual risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS classroom and environment to ensure the safety of the children.

Specifically…

* There is a whole school medicines policy. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the parent and / or carer.
* Fresh drinking water is available at all times ,
* Children’s dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
* There is a snack area and sink area where we provide healthy snacks and drinks.
* A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.

**Welfare**

“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.”

At The Cathedral Catholic Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We understand that we are required to:

• Promote the welfare of children.

• Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.

• Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.

• Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

• Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.

• Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.

• Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

**Observation, Assessment and Planning**

The planning within the EYFS follows the school’s long term plan alongside short term (weekly) plans which are based around the individual children’s needs and interests. These plans are used and implemented by the teachers who have a good understanding of their children. We make regular assessments of children’s learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children’s individual profile (Tapestry) and additional evidence is in children’s writing, maths and RE books.

**Planning**

Long term planning: There is a yearly long term plan linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage which forms the framework of learning objectives for Early Years.

Medium term planning: The Reception teacher plans half termly topics based on the areas of learning from the Early Years Foundation Stage framework with activities linked to learning objectives and includes the interests of children.

Short term planning: Weekly plans link activities to learning objectives in the areas of learning, focusing on day to day teaching, allowing for revision and modification of learning activities informed by ongoing assessments and observations. These plans show how adults are to be deployed to focus on targeted groups for guided differentiated teaching, and how independent learning activities will be managed.

**Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents are children’s first and most enduring educators and we highly value the contribution that parents make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through communicating with parents as soon as their child is offered a place through letters, booklets and the ‘new starters’ section of our website, as well as…

• An initial home (or pre-school) visit prior to the children starting school.

• Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.

• Giving children the opportunity to spend time with the Early Year’s staff during induction sessions.

• Encouraging parents to talk to their child’s teachers about any concerns they may have.

• Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, Early Years staff and parents. For example, fund raising days, themed activity days, concerts including a Harvest Festival, class worship assemblies, The Nativity, Easter celebrations and Sports Day to which all family members are invited.

• Encouraging parents to support learning at home especially reading and phonics.

**Equality**

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking into account gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society

**Complaints**

Should parents feel they have questions or concerns about their child’s education they should speak to a member of the Early Years team in the first instance. Most things can be easily addressed through good communication and openness. However if a parent wished to discuss an issue and felt unable to do this with the staff they should contact the EYFS Leader or the Head teacher.

**Policy Monitoring and Review**

Monitoring of the standards of children’s work and of quality of teaching in reception is the responsibility of the headteacher and link governor supported by the EYFS leader.

This policy is monitored by the EYFS leader and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years.

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EYFS Policy

May 2020

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by Mrs Nicola Holt in consultation with the Leadership Team.

This policy will be reviewed as appropriate by The Senior Leadership Team

Intended Policy Review Date – May 2022

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Headteacher)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Governor)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Next review due May 2020**