

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

2022 - 2023



Our Lady & St Thomas  
Catholic Primary, Wellington

As a **Rights Respecting School** we uphold the articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. These articles underpin our EYFS policy:

Article 3 (best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

Article 28 (right to education) Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 29 (goals of education) Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

This policy will include the following areas:

1. Our aims for the EYFS children at OLST
2. Legislation
3. Structure of the EYFS at OLST
4. Curriculum Expectations
5. Our Curriculum at OLST
6. Assessment
7. Working with Parents
8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures
9. Monitoring Arrangements

Appendix 1:

List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Appendix 2:

Reading in Class 1

## 1. Our aims for the EYFS children at OLST

This policy aims to ensure that the EYFS children at OLST:

- Have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the knowledge and skills needed to be Year 1 ready and also to make good progress through school and through life.
- Have good quality teaching and provision so that they make good progress with their learning.
- Have the benefits of school practitioners and parents working in close partnership to ensure that each child is happy, confident and supported to achieve their potential.
- Are included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

## 2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework 2021.

## 3. Structure of the EYFS

The EYFS class at OLST is a mixed age Nursery/Reception class. Currently there are 13 Reception children and 5 Nursery children (this number will rise across the year) in Class 1. All aspects of the Early Years curriculum are taught using a mixture of teacher led learning and learning through continuous provision.

When children begin their time at Our Lady & St Thomas they come to school full time (with an option of part time for Nursery children) from the first day of term. This follows a comprehensive induction programme in the previous Summer Term (See 'Working with parents' in section 7)

## 4. Curriculum Expectations

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS.

At OLST practice is led by the following four main principles:

The Statutory Framework for EYFS states that there are four main principles which should shape practice in EYFS. These themes are:

*A unique Child:* Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

*Positive Relationships:* Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

*Enabling Environments:* Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.

*Learning and Development:* Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

At OLST we support children to develop Characteristics of Effective Learning by providing an enabling environment and stimulating activities. We appreciate that children learn in different ways and planning is completed accordingly.

The children achieve with their Prime and Specific areas of learning through development of the Characteristics of Effective Learning which are:

*Playing and Exploring* - children finding out and exploring, playing with what they know and being willing to 'have a go'

*Active learning* - being involved and concentrating, keeping on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoying their achievements

*Creating and thinking critically* - children having their own ideas, making links between their ideas and choosing their own ways to do things.

## 5. Our Curriculum at OLST

The children are supported to achieve in all the above areas of learning through planned, adult led activities, purposeful play and child initiated activities. Each child's needs and interests are taken into consideration.

**Reading** is a priority in EYFS at OLST as it is key to all other aspects of learning - See Appendix 2 - *Reading in Class 1*.

**Writing** is developed through daily opportunities both structured and child initiated.

**Maths skills and mathematical language** is developed through daily teacher led activities as well as all the child initiated opportunities provided through our maths rich environment, both inside and outside.

In EYFS at OLST we follow a bespoke curriculum which we and the Bishop Hogarth Trust have developed for **Understanding the World** and **Expressive Arts and Design** which link in KS1 to

**Science, Geography, History, Art and DT** to learn about the world from their village to the wider world. This has been planned with our own children in mind in order to enrich their experiences.

As part of our curriculum the children have many opportunities for outdoor learning which includes **Forest School** activities. For these activities we use our EYFS outdoor area, our school field and our school garden which has a pond, fire circle, planting beds and wild area.

The children in EYFS are given specialist sports coaching each week to enhance their **Physical Development**.

We provide the children with many experiences to support and enrich our curriculum. These include activities such as visits from the zoo lab, music projects from County Music Services, theatre productions, class and whole school trips, links to other countries where Tanzanian, South African and Chilean teachers visited our school.

A more formal approach is gradually introduced to Reception children as they progress through the EYFS stage so that they are Year 1 ready.

## 6. Assessment

At OLST, ongoing observational assessment is an important part of our daily life. Our planning and individualised support for each child is informed by this. All staff know the children inside out and are able to talk about their levels of achievement, their interests, friendships, learning styles and what makes them happy. The class teacher also shares achievements with parents and in return the parents enjoy telling us stories from home.

The class teacher visits each child in previous settings when appropriate before they start at Our Lady & St Thomas. The nurseries pass on assessment records and talk about each individual child and parents share equivalent information from home.

On joining our setting the children are individually assessed against the EYFS curriculum during their first few weeks in Nursery or Reception then again at the end of the Autumn and Spring Terms. In June Reception children have their statutory assessment against the Early Learning Goals. This determines whether the child is on track, meeting a good level of development. These results are reported and shared with parents.

Statements related to Characteristics of Effective Learning are also shared with parents.

To support EYFS assessment practitioners attend cluster moderation meetings within the Bishop Hogarth Trust.

## 7. Working with parents

At OLST we value strong relationships with parents. We promote this through our:

### **EYFS Induction Programme:**

The children in Class 1 come to us from a wide range of backgrounds. For some this will be their first educational setting while others will have attended private nurseries or other school nurseries. Some families will be familiar with school already and some will have had no previous contact. For this reason we provide a comprehensive induction programme which ensures that families are confident, happy and

comfortable to send their child in to us full time on the first day of school in September. The induction programme involves a meeting for all new families to introduce the school and the staff, two visits to school for the children, stay and play sessions for the new parents, 1:1 meetings for the parents with the class teacher and the class teacher visiting each new child in their previous environment. This induction programme proves to be successful as the children come into school confidently on their first day, ready to learn.

***Parents' Evenings/Reports:***

There will be parents' evenings in November and March to update families on the progress and development of each child.

Written reports will be completed in the Summer Term

Where there are concerns raised by school or home meeting will be immediately set up at any point across the year.

## **8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy. These are in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework 2021.

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Alison Brown (EYFS lead) and Ruth Veitch (Headteacher) every year.

## **Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS**

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy

## Appendix 2 – Reading in Class 1



Our Lady & St Thomas RC Primary School



# Reading in Class 1 – Nursery/Reception

Reading is a very large and important part of our Early Years provision in Class 1. Staff are passionate about books and enjoy the pleasure the children get from reading, whether they are inventing a story from pictures as they do at first or whether they are blending and reading independently for the first time.

These are the **daily** reading activities completed by the Nursery and Reception pupils in Class 1:

### Phonics Teaching:

In Nursery the children will take part in group times to develop their phonological awareness. This will include practical activities such as listening walks, rhyming stories and activities, telling stories from pictures and listening to stories. During the Summer Term they will begin to be introduced to phonic sounds through Read Write Inc.

In Reception, from the first week, the children begin to learn letter sounds and letter formation. We teach using the Read, Write Inc Letters and sounds scheme. The children learn three new sounds each week and move through the Set 1 sounds rapidly. Every day, with each new sound taught we practise blending CVC words. We carry out regular assessment to ensure the children are all keeping up and where children do not know all the sounds taught we give immediate support to ensure that they stay on track. Each day during the phonics lesson the children complete individual work in their books with the teacher where they say the sound, identify the letter and learn to form the letters correctly.

Also from the first week at school the children take home a sound book so they can practise the sound and letter formation at home with their parents. Parents find this useful as they can keep up to date with their child's learning and know how each letter is formed.

### Guided Reading:

The Reception children in Class 1 take part in Guided Reading sessions several times per week. They participate in activities which will foster their love of books, develop their vocabulary and develop early reading skills. These activities include sharing stories, reading shared texts, discussing stimulating pictures, describing characters and developing understanding of new and adventurous words.

### Reading with an adult in school:

The children in the class have many opportunities throughout the week to read with teachers, teaching assistants, student teachers and student teaching assistants. They read to an adult at least four times per week.

We have a focussed group of children who spend a little more time reading to adults.



### **Story Time:**

Story times in Class 1 are very important to us and the children look forward to these times. They love both whole class and group stories and discussions. We read a carefully selected bank of books each term so that the children become familiar with the stories and characters within the books. The children are encouraged to share their opinions about the book we have read, discuss settings and characters and explore new vocabulary. Story times also support the children in the development of their listening, understanding and speaking skills.

### **Extended Writing with a story focus:**

Each week the children in Class 1 complete an extended writing task. Sometimes we draw and write about experiences we have in class such as when we make pizzas or when we make a magic potion or even go for a ride on a magic carpet. Often our extended writing has a story focus where we might retell the story, use adjectives to describe a setting or character, make a list or predict what might happen next.

### **Writing Zone with a story focus:**

The children love our classroom writing zone where they can use a range of different pens, pencils, glue and scissors to be creative as they explore writing and develop their fine motor skills. This area has a story focus so the children can get to know the particular book in great detail. The children love the books they read often and they enjoy becoming so familiar with them that they can join in as you read them.

### **Continuous Provision - Reading Rich Environment**

In Class 1 we provide a reading rich environment. There are reading opportunities in all of the areas of our provision - inside and outside:

#### **Inside:**

- As previously mentioned, we have a writing zone with a book focus.
- We have a specific quiet reading area which is a comfortable and relaxing area where the love of story can be independently explored and developed.
- Our role play area always provides opportunities for reading - when it's a pizza shop the children will read recipe books, menus, instructions on the pizza boxes and stories about food or going out for meals. The children's own writing will be on the display and they enjoy reading each other's work.
- Our sacred space displays the bible and a range of children's Bible story books to read. The children also enjoy reading our class prayers.
- Our seasonal change area provides a range of reading experiences including books which link to the current season and a wealth of exciting vocabulary to go with it.
- Our construction zone is a separate room and is always story themed. Whatever the theme there will be writing and design opportunities as well as books to share and vocabulary linked to the book on display.
- Our Christmas elf brings a new book to the children every day in December.

**Outside:**

- We have a reading/writing shed which is stocked with books, paper, writing equipment and anything else the children choose to enhance their child initiated reading and writing experiences.
- There is a willow den which the children love to put cushions into and read in a peaceful, natural environment.
- We have themed areas which vary but there are always books to share related to the areas and topic vocabulary on display.
- There is vocabulary all around the area relating to our bug area and role play areas.
- We have recipe books for the children to read in the mud kitchen.
- There are books related to tractors and construction in the gravel pit.

**Class 1 Library:**

The children have helped to set up our own library in Class 1. They each contributed to selecting the books they would like to have in our library. Each week the children select a book to take home from the library to share with their parents.

**Home Reading Books:**

The children in Nursery take home a weekly discussion board which provides opportunities for their parents to support them in developing vocabulary, asking and answering questions and developing descriptive language.

The children in Reception take books home to read which are matched to the sounds they are learning and to develop and reinforce sounds previously taught.

The children are expected to read and have their home/school reading record signed at least four times per week. This is a whole school expectation. In Class 1 the children are rewarded with special reading stickers each week if they meet this challenge.

From the first week in Reception the children take home picture/wordless books to share and discuss with their parents. They also take home books to develop and encourage reading for pleasure.

Once the children are blending sounds their reading books will link to Read Write Inc texts and contain CVC words for them to blend and read independently. This will progress to include the Set 2 sounds and also CCVC and CVCC words. They will continue to take home additional books to develop and encourage reading for pleasure.

The children also take home a sound book which we update twice per week. This book contains the sounds taught.