



## St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School

### EYFS Policy

Date approved: September 2025

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#### 1 Introduction

The Catholic ethos of church schools, which is so valued by parents, is achieved through the hard work of staff and governors, in building a learning community that is underpinned with Catholic values. We embed our school mission statement from the start; We all work together to do our best to shine with God's love, pride and success in a happy, peaceful and prayerful place where everyone tries to be kind, helpful and caring.

1.1 The Foundation Stage applies to children from two years of age to the end of the Reception year. At St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School, all children are admitted in the September of the school year in which they are five. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

1.2 Children joining our school have been in a variety of settings prior to joining us. They have already learnt a great deal. The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

##### A unique child

Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Every area of development-physical, cognitive, linguistic, spiritual, social and emotional-is equally important.

The diversity of individuals and communities is valued and respected. No child or family is discriminated against.

Young children are vulnerable. They develop a great resilience when their physical and psychological well-being is protected by adults. This includes their health, an integral part of their emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual well-being and is supported by attention to these aspects.

##### Positive relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and staff. Every interaction is based on caring professional and respectful acknowledgement of the feelings of children and their families.

Parents are children's first educators. When parents and practitioners work together in our setting,

the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning. We promote warm, trusting relationships with knowledgeable adults who support children's learning effectively.

### Learning and development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In play children can learn at their highest level.

Play with peers is important for children's development. When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with varied resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.

At St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School we feel that children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.

### Enabling Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. It is both rich and stimulating, with opportunities for learning indoors and outdoors. The environment supports every child's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable.

At St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School, we provide a rich and varied environment that supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in a safe, yet challenging indoor and outdoor space.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is made up of seven areas of Learning and Development. All areas of Learning and Development are connected to one another. There are three prime areas and four specific areas. All areas of Learning and Development are underpinned by the Principles of the EYFS.

### 2 Aims

2.1 The quality of the children's early learning experiences is highly significant in laying a sound basis for further success in education. The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, promoting and developing children's:

- personal, social and emotional well-being;
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning;
- social skills;
- attention skills and persistence;
- language and communication;
- literacy;
- mathematics;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;

- physical development;
- creative development.

### 3 Implementation

3.1 The features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement and so that parents are informed.
- the understanding that teachers have of the way in which a young child learns and grows;
- equality of access to all areas of learning in a high quality environment will be provided for all children;
- the range of provision for children to learn in a variety of ways that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play or other means of communication;
- a planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- providing children with activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning and to develop independence and self-management;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations and target setting which can be shared with parents;
- the good relationships between the school and the settings that the children experience prior to admission to the school, by visiting several local nurseries prior to the children starting school;
- the identification of training needs for all adults working in the foundation stage;
- providing a smooth transition from home to school by inviting parents and children into school for pre-school interviews, prior to entry in September;
- inviting parents into school for pre-school presentation during Summer term;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support when necessary.

### 4 Play

4.1 Play is the prime medium through which young children learn. Play can engage the child's whole being, physically, mentally and emotionally. Through play they practice and build up ideas, understand the need for rules and make sense of the world. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. Carefully structured play activities with clear expectations are developed and supported.

### 5 Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

5.1 We believe that all children matter and they are given every opportunity to achieve their best. Account is taken of their range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

5.2 In the Foundation Stage realistic and challenging expectations are set that meet the needs of the children, so that most will achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. Some will progress beyond this into the expectations of KS1. 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.

### 5.3 We meet the needs of the children by:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies that are based on their learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively, e.g. self assessment;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment that values each child's contribution;
- using resources that reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning a range of challenging activities for children of varying ability;
- offering pre-school interviews and visiting some local settings prior to the children starting school;
- providing a buddy system for each child as they enter school until the end of the first half term;
- the identification of training needs for all adults working in the Foundation Stage;
- providing children with paediatric trained staff throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## 6 Impact

The impact of the provision is identified through continual assessment, concluding with assessment against the Early Learning Goals.

6.1 Early Learning Goals (ELG) the curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. The experiences that the children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

6.2 The Early Learning Goals are in line with the objectives in the National Curriculum. By the end of the Reception year, children will have a daily Mathematics lesson and an English lesson to prepare them for Year One. The Reception teacher will liaise very closely with the Year One teacher to help with the transition between the key stages.

6.3 The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. National Schemes of work will be used where appropriate to support the planning for individual children. Medium term planning is completed half-termly. Plans are/ can be supplemented to build on class or children's interests.

## 7 Assessment

7.1 We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment takes the form of observation of child-initiated tasks as well as adult led. There may be photographic evidence and the child's finished product as well as a written record of observation made throughout the year. Assessment at St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School involves teachers and other adults as appropriate.

7.2 On entry to school, the children will be assessed using the DfE's Baseline Assessment. This will be used as a starting point from which their progress at the end of KS2 will be measured. Simultaneously, the practitioners will make assessments against Birth to 5 Matters to ascertain the range that the child is working within.

7.3 During the Foundation Year, pupils will be assessed against the descriptive ranges as set out in Birth to Five Matters. Practitioners will identify a range that best fits the child and then assess them

as to whether they are making progress defined as being on track or not on track. Support will be put in place for those identified as not being on track.

7.4 At the end of the year judgements will then be made as to whether they are emerging or expecting within each of the 17 ELGs.

7.5 The Foundation Stage Profile is continuous, and assessments are made by observations of children at activities and assessing independent work, this is on-going. School will be using 'Class Dojo' as means of recording the children's achievements. 'Class Dojo' enables school to keep parents regularly updated with their child's achievements.

7.6 During the Autumn term, and Spring term, parents will be asked to attend an individual consultation meeting. Parents will be advised of next steps for their children and how best to support their child in achieving them.

7.7 At the end of the Autumn and Spring term, parents will receive a termly update on their child's progress. This will identify if the child is making progress in line with expectations/ above expectations or below. It also reports on the child's attitude to learning.

7.8 In July, parents will be given a detailed written report addressing their child's progress in each of the ELGs. This will include a short narrative about how they learn most effectively, according to the three characteristics of learning. The Year One teacher will also receive this information.

## 8 The role of parents

8.1 Parents are the first and most important teachers. Effective and meaningful partnerships are the best guarantees of children's successful learning. The role that parents have played and will play in the future in educating their children is recognised through;

- Headteacher showing prospective parents around the school, understanding the importance of personal approach;
- talking to parents before entering school;
- inviting all parents to an Induction meeting in the term before admission;
- offering pre-school visit to parents and children before their child enters school;
- visiting local nurseries prior to entering school;
- offering an open door policy to parents if they have any concerns or worries;
- providing a weekly newsletter to inform parents of forthcoming events
- having overviews on the Reception class page for parents to access monthly overviews and weekly updated pictures;
- parents are invited to become directly involved in school life through volunteering to help in school, attending the PTA meetings and becoming a Governor;
- offering a range of activities that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- signing of the home school agreement before the commencement of full time education;
- the completed Foundation Stage Profile report to parents at the end of the year;
- invitation for parents to come to the Christmas Nativity, celebration assemblies, Harvest, Christmas and Easter services held in church.
- letters of information regarding the current topic of study, school trips or any special activity that has been planned for the children such as baking or food tasting.

## 9 Special Educational Needs

9.1 Close and regular co-operation with parents/ outside agencies will be a priority for the children who have special educational needs. Careful records will be made of strengths, problems, areas for development and progress. If required, Learning Support Plans (LSPs) will be made and shared with parents, children and any staff who may work with the child.

## 10 Resources

10.1 The learning environment is planned to encourage a positive attitude to learning. Materials and equipment are chosen to reflect both the community and the wider world and are of good quality and safety. Children are often encouraged to make their own selection from the activities on offer to encourage independent learning