

St. Oswald's Catholic Primary School EYFS Policy 2025/26

Written by: Mrs Gill – EYFS leader



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Love Jesus, Love Learning,

Love each other.

“We are a learning community promoting the Gospel values of mutual trust, care and respect.”

As a school, we ensure that all children and staff are treated fairly and equally. All children have equal rights to access all areas of the curriculum, regardless of race, gender and disability. Within this Key stage, the SMT and all staff endeavour to provide the appropriate provision for this to occur. This policy follows the guidance and practices that are stated and outlined in St Oswald’s Equality Scheme.

Intent

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we aim:

- To set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most of them achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation stage and for some to progress beyond this point.
- To give our children every opportunity to achieve their best.
- To take account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.
- To be flexible in our planning and involve children in the development of activities related to their interests where appropriate.
- To ensure that our planning meets the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities and children from all social and cultural backgrounds.
- To value the importance of Early Years Education, both during and beyond the foundation stage.
- To contribute towards raising educational standards within the school and ensures that the needs of the youngest children are met within the context of whole school policies, curriculum, planning, agreed teaching approaches and organisational structures.

- To meet The Foundation Stage aims and maintain a safe, relaxed, attractive, stimulating and reassuring environment for the children in which their physical, language and personal, social and emotional needs will be met.
- To be committed to honesty and responsibility in all relationships.
- To provide a rich, stimulating and exciting curriculum, which challenges pupils, to achieve his or her full potential and have the best possible start to their school life.
- To create a family ethos with a caring and welcoming atmosphere that gives us all a sense of belonging.
- To provide a calm, safe environment for every person to grow, learn and feel valued.
- To provide each individual with the life skills necessary to become a responsible citizen.
- To provide opportunities to form links with the local communities, developing our understanding of the world beyond our school.
- To provide a good partnership that works positively between practitioners and with parents/carers.
- To provide a balance of child initiated and adult led learning experiences, which include continuous provision and small group activities.
- To provide a curriculum the encompasses the four guiding principles and commitments:
 - A unique child
 - Positive relationships
 - Enabling environments which all lead to the good
 - Learning and development of every child

Aims for the children in the Early Years

The main aim for our children in the Foundation Stage is to welcome them into school in a positive and friendly way. The school recognises that the transition from Nursery to school needs to be a good experience. We have one Reception class and an induction program, allowing the children to be introduced to the school in stages. The staff at St Oswald's school believe that the following principles underpin their practice and reflect a shared vision of how children develop and learn the activities and experiences that help children make progress and the type of stimulating environment and activities that promote opportunities for active learning.

We believe that:-

- Each child should be valued as an individual.
- A positive ethos needs to be promoted and consistent about behaviour and expectations.
- The safeguarding and welfare requirements of each child are paramount.
- Each child has the right to free play as well as to structured learning, experiences, exploring and investigation materials, objects and relationships.
- The learning and development opportunities experienced by the children are planned around the individual needs, which build on and extend their interests and knowledge.
- The learning and development of each child assessed and reviewed regularly and next steps are developed.
- The children should talk about their learning and develop in independence and self-management.
- A range of approaches to provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and above all extend and develop play and talk.

Implementation

At St Oswald's Primary School, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We know that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates and that attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their school and home environments and therefore we build those important links with the families. We observe how each child learns to gain an understanding of the characteristics they develop to become effective learners. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem. During their first year at school, the children are encouraged to learn good learning habits. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, cooperative and to use reasoning. Children begin to understand the concept of growth mind set. They learn that they can 'grow their brains' and understand that everyone can learn with practice and effort. The children learn how to become successful learners and be proud of what they achieve.

Each child has independent learning requirements including those who may have particular needs or disabilities. All children are given the support and encouragement they need so that no child is left

behind in the hopes that each child will reach their full potential and make good progress. 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 each child's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively and ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- providing a rich and stimulating environment which is safe and supportive to learning where 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;
- monitoring the children's progress and taking action to provide support or challenge when necessary. This involves speech therapy and links with the OT and EAL team for some of our children.

Planning and Organising the Curriculum

The Early Years curriculum is based on the EYFS curriculum guidance and is planned to lead smoothly into the National Curriculum Guidance at KS1 in a way that is meaningful for all children. The Foundation Stage stresses the importance of the child's personal, emotional and social development, communication and language and physical development that lay the foundation for each child's future. The Foundation Stage staff work closely together to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that addresses the seven areas of learning and development:

Prime areas of Learning:

- **Personal, Social, Emotional Development** – split into 3 aspects – building relationships, managing self and self-regulation
- **Communication and Language** – split into 2 aspects – listening, attention and understanding and speaking.
- **Physical Development** – split into 2 aspects – gross motor skills and fine motor skills.

Specific areas of Learning:

- **Literacy** – split into 3 aspects – comprehension, word reading and writing
- **Mathematics** – split into 2 aspects – Numbers and numerical patterns
- **Understanding the World** – split into 3 aspects – people, cultures and communities, the natural world and past and present.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – split into 2 aspects – creating with materials and being imaginative and expressive.

None of these areas of Learning and Development are delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. The prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive (quote The Early Years Stage Statutory Framework pg 4). All the areas must be delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a mix of adult led and child initiated activities (quote The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework pg 6). We aim to provide a coherent curriculum, with a clear focus for learning, which contributes to the development for the whole child. As a result, children are able to extend what they know, can do and understand within a realistic context. We believe that children learn in different ways and aim to ensure that we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these within our practice.

- **Playing and exploring** - we acknowledge the importance of play and aim to provide appropriately structured activities that support and develop the children's need to socialise, express ideas, thoughts and feelings, observe and try things out for themselves and have a go.
- **Active Learning** - We aim to encourage the children to have the confidence, flexibility and support to move freely between the areas, engaging in a balance of child initiated and adult led activities. Giving them time and space to explore and develop their ideas and interests and become immersed in their own learning, concentrate and enjoy their achievements.
- **Creating and thinking critically** - The Foundation Stage staff acknowledges that often children will learn things incidentally and work sensitively to develop such opportunities further providing them with strategies that will help them make links between these ideas.

The activities offered in the early years are married up to the EYFS curriculum and children are provided with many opportunities in order to reach these objectives in a variety of ways to ensure full understanding. Medium term planning is completed half termly through a variety of topics, with a focus on learning through stories. Topics are taken from the long term plan which is closely linked to

the literacy planning. However, we do aim to involve the children in the planning of topics, using their questioning skills, ideas and suggestions on their own learning and activities to develop them as independent learners. We also aim to involve the parents by providing them with the overall topic information and setting challenges for them to do with the children to enhance their learning. Through our, "All About Me," booklets and parent and child voice questionnaires, we give the parents and children the opportunity to provide information about their interest and what they would like to find out about.

Weekly planning is developed from the half termly plans, and is delivered through our daily screens. Maths planning is linked to the topic whenever possible, but we do use white rose maths to teach our math sessions daily using master the curriculum resources. We also provide a plan for the independent and child initiated learning which gives suggestions of what we would like the children to experience in each of the areas, these are added to if an adult led activity is needed in that area.

As a foundation stage team, we work together to identify individual learning needs and plan next steps for the children which are shared with the parents via Seesaw or during Parent/Carer interviews. For children who have specific needs we have intervention planning (Sparkle time) which meet the needs of individual children thus ensuring that each child makes the best possible progress over time. These plans are shared with the learning support assistants who give regular feedback to the class teacher regarding any achievements or difficulties they have observed. A copy of the intervention planning and reviews are given to the Inclusion Manager and the child's parents/carers where appropriate.

The Foundation Stage, apart from the first day, has the same session times as the rest of the school (8.50am – 3.30pm). There are 2 classroom bays which are designated for learning and teaching of literacy, maths and understanding the world, creative and PSE&C incorporated into them. The other bay is used for the structured play activities, where teachers interact and model activities with the children. There are 2 doors which give access to a shared outdoor classroom which is available to the children at all times. There is also a creative area where children can paint, draw, construct and use play dough. The children join in with school assemblies, key stage collective worships and whole school activities, celebrations and events i.e. sports day, other faith weeks, school performances etc.

The Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

The curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the Development Matters document. The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning. At St Oswald's the children are involved in daily RE, literacy, phonics, mathematics and topic sessions which vary in length as the year progresses and are dependent on the ability of the child. By the end of the Reception year in our school, all children have a daily phonics, mathematics, literacy, RE and topic session to maintain a smooth transition to Key stage 1. Children in the foundation stage are set for Phonics according to ability, the rest of the time the children are taught within their class groups but will be grouped according to their ability within literacy and Maths. The groupings also change according to the activity being undertaken – group, paired, friendship groups. The children engage in focussed activities with an adult (teacher or TA – heads down activities) and independently where they are given opportunities to take part in self-directed activities with adults co-playing and engaging with quality interactions with the children to take their learning forward (heads up activities). Planning is based on key skills and children grouped accordingly at their level of entry for these key skills. All adults working with the children are aware of where each child is and where they need to go next. All adults will add to our assessment book on achievements and consolidation during heads down activities and the see- saw tool is used to record any observations. Each area/activity has a specific number of spaces and children are encouraged to put their name in their chosen activity right from the beginning of the year, which helps to develop independence. Trips and visitors are organised within each topic. The overarching aim of our Foundation Stage curriculum is to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe and that it promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school life. We will do this by

- Setting the standards by ensuring we fulfil the EYFS themes and commitments;
- Providing for equality of opportunity;
- Creating a framework for partnership;
- Improving quality and consistency;
- Laying a secure foundation for future learning.

The Outdoor Area

We provide well-planned outdoor activities and experiences that is based on the EYFS Curriculum Framework. We follow the schools Health and Safety Policy, which can be found on the website. Risk assessments are implemented on a daily basis and encourage both staff and children to be involved in this wherever possible. Activities provided in this area are for small groups of children. A range of equipment, resources and activities are available to promote learning, creativity and physical development and allows them to explore and be inquisitive on a larger scale and children are able to learn from their peers. In the outdoor area children will be encouraged to:

- Further develop co-ordination and manipulative skills – using sand and water equipment as well as construction equipment;
- Form relationships and learn to play co-operatively with others in small groups and pairs;
- Gain Scientific, mathematical and geographical concepts;
- Develop linguistic skills and extend their vocabulary;
- Develop creativity and imagination – role play situations, easels;
- Follow the developed code of conduct and Ozzies way when using the outdoor area;
- Answer questions and find things out through their own investigations of provided activities;
- Work together as a team helping to tidy away;
- Use small equipment purposefully developing their fine and gross motor skills:
 - Bean bags/quoits – to throw, aim, catch, and score
 - Hoops – to jump in and out, through, aim into to
 - Ropes – for balancing, skipping
 - Bats/balls – bouncing, rolling, sending/receiving.

We believe that the adult is crucial in planning and providing a secure outdoor environment through which children are supported and challenged in the planned and spontaneous experiences and activities that occur in the outdoor area. Planning is done on a weekly basis on the Enhancement plan. Adults give input and time to introduce children to routines, activities, and correct use of the equipment. They also conduct formal and incidental observations and assessment that will be used to inform the profile assessment which is on-going throughout the year. The adults within the foundation stage will work on

heads up (co-playing and engaging the children) and on heads down activities (focussed learning and teaching). The Outdoor area is used when adults are there to supervise, but on occasion children will be allowed to access the outdoor area independently. The children will be involved in tidying the area at the end of the morning and afternoon session. The outdoor provision promotes the inclusion of all children irrespective of ability, gender, social and cultural background. The sand and water trays are also situated outdoor. Other areas of the school are also used i.e. the school garden, school field and faith garden to give the children a range of environments to work in. Whenever possible the children are also involved in using the immediate local environment to further their learning – trips to the local park, walks around the town centre and to Skitters woods or visits to the church. The educational trips organised, take the children further afield, and link to the topic.

The Foundation Stage Team meet regularly in the mornings to discuss planning and observations, there are brief sessions throughout the day for further discussions if needed. In the Foundation Stage, we also provide the early stages of religious teaching through the use of the Come and See RE syllabus. The Foundation Stage is well resourced for the play activities in all areas of the curriculum. Topic boxes, which can be easily accessed, are continually being developed to develop the children's imagination and creativity. To help develop their creativity we use a variety of books and resources to help provide a wide range of activities and starting points in a number of areas. We endeavour to provide a topic related role-play, with enhancements and different scenarios introduced to stimulate the children. We continually have a role-play house throughout the year.

Health and Safety

Along with the whole school Health and Safety policy we also follow procedures within our foundation stage.

- The Class teacher has attended paediatric first aid courses and is a certified first aider. The class teacher sits with the children during snack time and dinner time every day to observe the children whilst eating.
- When children are sick this is covered with specified powder and is cleared by cleaning staff. Parents are informed and children sent home.
- When children have a toilet accident depending on the type of accident children either change themselves into clean clothes and underwear sent home, or parents/carer are contacted and

they come in to deal with the matter. Teachers do not change pupils who have soiled themselves unless it is essential for us to do so.

- If a child has a head bump, parents are informed by phone and are given the opportunity to come and check their child and make the decision to leave them in school or take them home. For major head bump the child is sent home and parents are advised to seek medical advice. Accident forms are filled in stating injury, time of day, first aid given and how it occurred. A key stage accident book is then filled in. For major accidents an LA form is also filled in.
- Risk assessments are conducted within the foundation stage areas and for equipment on a daily basis and also before going on school trips or outings. Any concerns are dealt with a recorded accordingly.

Staffing, Resources and Equipment

- To ensure that we fulfil the new EYFS the staffing of the Foundation Stage is as follow:- □ 2 Class Teachers, of which one is the Foundation Stage Leader;
- 1 Full time Teaching Assistants (NVQ Level 3 and is a cover supervisor when required)
- 1 Full time teaching assistant (NVQ Level 2)
- We also benefit from having students and wherever possible parent helpers are also timetabled for class support.

Involving Parents

The Foundation Stage Team recognises the fact that parents are an important and influential factor in a child's life. Parents are involved from a very early stage. The parents are welcomed into school the term before their child is to start for an information sharing session of both school and parents (New starter evening). It also gives them an opportunity for them to see the school, view resources and meet members of staff and other parents.

Parents continue to be:-

- Invited to bring their child to a story visit, new starter day and sports day before their child starts school.
- Invited to be involved in the weekly challenges where parents can work with their child on a variety of games and activities. These games and activities are related to phonics, reading, writing and maths and the different topics we plan throughout the year. This is done via Seesaw;
- Invited to a variety of Inspire sessions where they are welcomed into school to work along side children and staff and offering comments on an evaluation form (reading/phonics, writing/phonics, maths and Understanding the World);
- Informed about events in the school and the foundation stage by regular class blogs and a parents' board;
- Recognised as valuable helpers when children go on out of school trips;

- Informed about the curriculum covered by their child during our weekly blog, which is sent home via the See-Saw app;
- Invited to year group assemblies/performances each term;
- Working in partnership with the teacher by monitoring their child's reading homework ebooks are set and sent home via Seesaw and parents respond to how their child has read through the see-saw app;
- Invited to contribute to their child's learning journey through the See Saw app, where they can send messages, photos and recordings of their children;
- Invited to attend termly parent interviews to discuss the progress and targets of their child encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- Given the opportunity to fill in a parent evaluation form each term with the school giving focused questions for the parents to comment on;
Introduced to and involved with the development of their child's learning story. We use the See Saw app to record observational, photographic, interview commentary, pupils work in order to show the pupils learning journey throughout the year. The parents are encouraged to add to the information within the learning story file for their child i.e. observations made at home when their child has been at play, discussions with adults/peers, comments made by their child at home. The parents can access the See Saw app on a daily basis to see what their child has been up to throughout the day. Interim assessments will be sent home termly along with the parent and child 'voice' sheet so we can all be involved in their own learning and development throughout their reception year;
- There is regular two-way communication through the see-saw app and a weekly class blog; the whole school newsletter is also sent home via the school messaging system.

Involving Specialists and the Community

The Foundation Stage Staff recognise the importance of good liaison between carers involved with the children prior to entering school. Visits to Nursery Schools and play groups are conducted at the end of the summer term. These settings are encouraged to share and pass up any transition records and

assessment information they have on the children. Also, where appropriate the Foundation Stage team liaise with outside agencies – inclusion teams, psychologists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists etc.

The school has well established links with the local community and arranges visits to the school by outside agencies – police, nurse, dentist, lollipop person and fire service. The children are also given the opportunity to share in experiences, where appropriate, and use the surrounding community to develop their learning i.e. visits to the local parks, shops, church.

In order to implement the curriculum effectively, the Foundation Stage Leader:-

- Fulfils the themes, commitments and principles of the EYFS curriculum;
- Works very closely with the other Foundation Stage class teacher and teaching assistants when planning and when moderating assessments;
- Inducts any new systems being introduced to the Foundation stage;
- Ensures continuity, coverage and progression;
- Analyses baseline, profile and interim assessments and liaise with the Head Teacher, which is done on a termly basis;
- Liaises with the Head Teacher on target setting;
- Keeps other members of school staff up to date of any updates regarding the Foundation Stage;
- Liaises with Foundation Stage Team when planning for structured and non-structured play;
- Resources, monitors and extends play;
- Works closely with Foundation Stage Team when assessing learning through play;
- Is involved in SMT meetings;
- Plans and organises trips and visits linked to the topics;
- Makes Head and SMT aware of initiatives related to the Foundation Stage;
- Organises and implements Inspire Sessions and other parent meetings related to the Foundation stage;
- Creates and implements the Development plan;
- Works in partnership and liaises closely with the parents/guardians and wider community;
- Is involved in the induction and training of NVQ level Teaching Assistants and students;

- Is involved in the monitoring of the teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and report to the Head;
- Liaises with the year 1 teachers on the transition of the children at the end of the year.

The role of the Teaching Assistant is to:-

- Support implementation of planning;
- Organise and set up areas and resources;
- Monitor the children during play and feed back to the class teacher;
- Intervene sensitively ensuring good quality interactions with the children;
- Participate with the children during play activities co-playing and engaging children in the activities set out for the children (heads up activities);
- Observe children at play and make records of these observations including characteristics of learning and next steps where appropriate;
- To work with small groups of children on set activities (heads down activities);
- To assist in the displaying of children's work;
- Tidy away and ensure the area is clean and ready for the following day; □ To work with intervention groups.

Impact

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals and it is up to the practitioner to indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels or have not yet reached expected levels (emerging)

It is the Role of the Foundation Stage Team to:-

- Observe all children – highlighting areas of progress and areas for development;
- Monitor progress and the skills the children acquire with emphasis on what the children can do independently;
- Maintain an assessment file to show when targets have been reached so that next steps can be set;

- To complete baseline assessment when the children first enter school to provide information as to where children are at on entry and entered onto their individual profile assessment sheet. The children will be involved in a computerised on-entry baseline assessment, which will assess Literacy, Mathematics, Communication and Language and PSED. The other areas of learning will be assessed through incidental observations of children during their play during our heads up activities. The on-entry assessments will be conducted in the first two/three weeks of the children starting school;
- Update their profile assessments termly. These profile assessments indicate what each child can do in all 7 areas of learning and enables the class teacher to set targets or next steps for individuals or groups of children;
- Invite parents to discuss their child's achievements and targets in the termly parent interviews;
- Make ongoing assessments during the year of both focussed and incidental observations and along side these assessments complete two moderation tasks (set by the LA) within the year to support our ongoing judgements of the children
Provide the LA with a profile report upon request (on-entry and at the end of each term thereafter)
- Complete termly assessments for literacy, maths, understanding the world and give analysis to relevant subject leaders;
- Write annual reports that are sent to parents detailing their child's progress in all areas of learning highlighting their child's strengths and development needs and gives details of how the children learn (playing and exploring, Active Learning, Critical thinking and learning) (see reporting policy)
- To record the incidental observations of children all of the Foundation Stage staff use an app called See Saw take photographs, videos, recordings and written observations made of the children. These are shared with the parents who can access them at any time.

All this information helps to ensure that we are providing the children with the necessary support and challenge to ensure that they make the appropriate progress (5 development matters shifts or more from their on-entry scores).

When analysing data we use Sonar Tracker along with the whole school. This shows which children are on track or not on track for that moment in the term. Children who are not on track are monitored, and

given appropriate intervention to catch up. Parents are informed of their child's progress regularly, during the Autumn Term, Spring term and Summer term.

A typical Reception Journey

Continuity and Transition into Year 1.

Both year one teachers are provided with a large amount of information about the children they will be getting. Along with a formal liaison / handover meeting between all staff involved, the teachers are provided with:-

- The final profile scores of each area of learning;
- A copy of their end of year report;
- A short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three characteristics of effective learning to assist with the planning of activities in year 1.
- Any specific SEND reports are passed on and discussed in detail with the SENCO and the class teachers / support staff to ensure the transition is smooth.

Before the children enter year 1, they are given the opportunity to meet their new teacher for a day.

Pupils make good progress from their on-entry scores.

Pupils have good attitudes towards learning and always try their best.

Pupils reach their potential and most will meet the ELG and achieve GLD.

Pupils behave with consistently high levels of respect for others, displaying high levels of self-control and positive attitudes to their learning.

Pupils are independent and respectful of their environments.

Pupils are safe and feel safe.

Pupils show respect and know that they are respected too.

Pupils can pursue and explore their interests and curiosities.

Monitoring and Reviewing the Early Years Policy

The Head Teacher, staff and Governors will need to review this policy to ensure that it is being implemented appropriately and to take account changing circumstances. The success of the policy will be reviewed annually by discussion at staff meetings and along side monitoring of standards of teaching and learning in the Early Years.

Review Date	Signature	Position
October 2026		Head
		Chair of Governors
		Early Years Manager