

St Patrick's RC Primary School

Fairfield

'May Christ Be Seen In Us'



Early Years Policy

Approved Autumn 2020

Review Autumn 2021

Early Years Policy.

Early Years education applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St Patrick's RC Primary School, parents and carers may choose to start their child in our nursery the term after that their child has had their third birthday, depending on places, then continue their learning and development in reception class. Other children join St Patrick's Reception class in the academic year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children "learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe." We aim to support children in their learning through teaching and experiences that "gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and life." (Intro, pt2- Statutory Framework for EYFS 2017)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child - developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships - supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments - where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing - An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

Unique Child

St Patrick's R.C. Primary School recognises that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, 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 assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEND)

All children and their families are valued at St Patrick's RC Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions

available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities.

Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school's SENCO is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's SEND policy.

In order to accommodate the individual's particular learning style lessons will be planned wherever possible in a multi-sensory way so that the various activities will cater for all pupils in the spirit of inclusion. There will also be a consideration of how to record lesson outcomes so that the pupil is offered a variety of methods and is not inhibited by any specific difficulty.

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;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school 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 Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy).

"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."

(Section 3, 3.1- Statutory Framework for EYFS 2017)

At St Patrick's RC School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding 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 is 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.

Positive Relationships

At St Patrick's R.C. Primary School we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transfer sessions.
- We invite parents of new nursery children to stay with their child during their first visit to the setting. This invitation is extended, when and if necessary, to ensure parent and child feel familiar in the setting. We then operate an open -door policy for parents.
- We invite parents and their children, who are due to begin Reception, into school for a school dinner. All our transition practices primarily help the children become familiar with their new setting, while also aiding communication and establishing a relationship between staff and parents.

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school. Other Open Evenings can be arranged during the year to further establish communication between parents and teachers.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's progress at the end of Nursery and at the end of Reception.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents such as class collective worship, Masses, craft days and school visits.
- Providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing 'WOW' moments which inform planning and provision and receiving observations uploaded to our on-line learning journal- 'Tapestry' .

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Effective Learning

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. The observations are recorded in a number of ways: Each child has an on-line learning journey, which parents can access at home to view their child's WOW moments in school. Each child also has a Learning Journey, which shows the progress that the child has made. Reception children also have Maths, Literacy and Topic books where evidence of progress may be recorded.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning. In addition to this we also follow a formal phonics programme (Read, Write Inc.).

Learning and Development

Teachers and teaching assistants provide the curriculum in the reception class of up to a class size of 30 children.

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas." The prime areas are

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

The specific areas are

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

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the SEND Coordinator in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

At St Patrick's R.C. Primary School:

"Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1." (Section 1,1.8- Statutory Framework for EYFS 2017)

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At St Patrick's R.C. School we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are;



- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Section 1, 1.9 Statutory framework for EYFS 2017)

Being part of our Catholic community

St Patrick's Early Years Foundation Stage is part of the whole school community and as such seeks to provide the best in education for its pupils. The school motto, 'May Christ be seen in us', summarises the intent behind our work here at St Patrick's. When we are open to Christ, we move towards achieving full potential in all things. As a Catholic school we provide opportunities for prayer, worship and liturgy to become meaningful, pivotal and valued aspects of our lives in faith. In addition, we promote a climate of justice, care, honesty, diligence, respect, tolerance and forgiveness so that children and staff can relate with each other, with confidence and good purpose. (Please also see Whole School Mission Statement). As a Catholic school Religious Education is also taught in Early Years Foundation Stage, totalling 10% of learning time during the children's time in school (Please see RE Policy).

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of 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.

Health and Safety

At St Patrick's R.C. 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. Daily risk assessments of the setting are also completed by staff. In addition to this, an annual risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS (see EYFS risk assessment) and in the staff handbook, safeguarding and child protection policies, there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children. The EYFS risk assessment must

be read in conjunction with other relevant whole school policies (see EYFS risk assessment).

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2017, at St Patrick's R.C. we undertake:

- A whole school medicines policy please refer to: Supporting Pupils with

Medical Conditions.

- A file containing a photograph will be available in each classroom of any child with an allergy or medical condition with details of what is to be avoided/done to aid the child.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Children in Nursery are provided with milk each day and Reception children are provided with fruit in the classroom.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see Accident and Injury Policy). As of September 2017, one member of staff is fully trained in First Aid including paediatric trained, a further four members of staff are paediatric trained. There are always staff members who hold First Aid qualification and the Paediatric First Aid qualification on the premises at all times. In addition, there is at least one member of staff who holds a Paediatric First Aid qualification present on all school outings.
- The Head Teacher is the named behaviour manager for the whole school with the Deputy Head as the lead behaviour manager for the Early Years. (refer to Inclusions Policy, Behaviour Policy, Physical Restraint Policy)
- A Health and Safety Policy and procedures which covers identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A Fire and Emergency Evacuation procedure and policy
- A Safeguarding Policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff's own personal use.

Transition

From Pre-school /Other settings to Reception Class

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition:

- The glass doors between Nursery and Reception are open more frequently, for children who attend St Patrick's Nursery to become more familiar with the Reception classroom and staff. Children will visit the Year 1 class during story time.
- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.
- If a child is coming from another setting, members of staff from St Patrick's will contact the setting to gather information on the child's needs, to support the child's transition.
- 'Moving Forward' documents (or similar) will be requested from other settings for children who are new to St Patrick's.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support.
- In the Summer term children and parents are invited to attend school for lunch and to meet their new teacher.
- Children are invited to attend a transition day. Children from other settings are also invited.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

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, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding 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 key characteristics of effective 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.

S. Clark