



## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

**2025 - 2027**

### **Mission Statement**

Guided by truth, respect and compassion; we share in building upon every individual's foundation, nurturing a love of learning in preparation for tomorrow's society, with Jesus at the heart of all we do.

|                                     |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Governing Body with Responsibility  | Achievement and Standards Committee |
| Agreed by Governors on              | January 2025                        |
| Chair's Signature                   |                                     |
| Staff Member Responsible for Review | Headteacher                         |
| Date for Review                     | January 2027                        |

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### 1. Aims

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, we aim to provide every child with the skills to become a happy, independent and curious lifelong learner. Our priority is to provide a high level of engagement and active learning through a range of skill based activities.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- 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/or carers;
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**.

These principles are the key to a successful Early Years and we aim to address these throughout our policy. This policy also is set out to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all of our children, thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning and well-being.

### 2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

### 3. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

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

Our EYFS curriculum

- is at the heart of our learning journey approach
- is distinctive, innovative and strategically planned
- is reviewed in the light of national developments, new thinking and research and development
- introduces challenging, engaging and real life problems
- strives to encourage and develop a love of learning
- lets learning happen within a child centred approach
- ensures resources and apparatus are available to support learning at every stage of development
- ensures resources and apparatus are available to support learning in every area of the EYFS curriculum
- ensures all areas of learning are regarded with the same level of importance and are interlinked in learning
- includes fundamental British values to teach children a sense of self and belonging; enabling them to learn and stay true to the values that make people good human beings
- ensures that children learn to live together peacefully, with each of them playing a valuable role in the multi-cultural world in which they live

#### 3.1 Planning

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with our EYFS children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. Staff refer to the Development Matters guidance to identify next steps for each child to deepen, challenge and extend their learning.

The Early Years offers an inclusive experience for those children identified as having a SEND need. Targets are set using IEP's to meet the needs of individual children and support them to access the curriculum.

Children who have been identified to make accelerated progress are supported to learn independently and offered opportunities to extend their own learning through play based activities as well as adult led learning. Children are rewarded for challenging themselves and extending their learning through "stamp cards".

All children in reception are heard to read 3 times per week in groups following the Little Wandle phonics and reading scheme.

Children who have been identified as needing additional support are read with individually on a daily basis to support their phonics development.

Those children who need further challenge are offered additional reading scheme books once per week.

Children in nursery and reception are able to select a reading for pleasure book once per week.

Within whole class teaching of literacy and maths, targeted questions to support and extend SEND and higher attaining pupils are in place.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

Planning is based around topics and children's interests and medium term plans are written half termly and used as a guide for weekly planning. Activities based on skill may be led by adult facilitators and these activities allow learning to happen through creating opportunities, a supportive environment and a sound pedagogical understanding. Children are encouraged to challenge themselves through self-selecting tasks and activities. The activities available offer opportunities for extended learning and are structured to develop children's learning.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

## 3.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. The children have the choice of where they choose to learn and child initiated activities are encouraged with the continuous provision being adapted accordingly. All activities are based on the current assessment and have a main learning intention that can be accessed with and without adult support. Practitioners enhance provision and respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction using objects, prompts, conversations and questioning. The provision is linked to the age related expectations of the cohort.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Areas are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, be creative etc.

Children have access to both the inside and the outside environment at various points in the day which is known to have a positive effect on the children's development. The Early Years Foundation Stage pupils have their own outdoor area with sand or water, climbing equipment, bikes, writing opportunities, mud kitchen, construction and role play. Spending time outdoors offers opportunities for exploring and learning things differently to when pupils are indoors and gives things a different perspective. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

## 4. Assessment

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes.

The assessment of pupil's attainment is based on observations, discussions, questioning and evidence of the children's independent and guided learning.

The assessments cover all 17 areas of the Early Years curriculum looking at each area and referring to the Development Matters guidance.

We ensure our end of EYFS assessments are consistent and reliable through:

- our knowledge of the child gained through observations and interactions
- our environment enabling the child to flourish to their full capacity
- our assessments ensuring a range of contributors e.g. parents, all EYFS staff
- moderation across EYFS and KS1 team
- Moderation with external bodies e.g. diocese, surrounding schools, local authority

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Data for the prime areas and reading, writing and maths is input and analysed by the EYFS lead at the end of each term in line with Years 1 – 6. All other data for the wider curriculum is also input in line with the rest of the school, biannually.

## 5. Working with Parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is also assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- On track to meet expected level of development
- Working towards the expected level of development

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. Parents and carers are able to discuss their child's individual needs informally with their child's teacher throughout the year when necessary and at a formal parent's evenings twice a year. They receive a written report on their child's achievements at the end of the year.

## 6. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years and have enhanced our provision around oral hygiene by talking to children about the effects of eating too many sweet things and the importance of brushing your teeth as outlined in the new framework.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

## 7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by \_\_\_\_\_ every \_\_\_\_\_ of years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

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

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according to the EYFS statutory framework.

| 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                                |