

# St Paul's Catholic Nursery and Primary School



## Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



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## Introduction

This policy is designed to help parents of new nursery and reception children starting at St Paul's Catholic Primary School. If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact our EYFS Leader Mrs Thrasyvoulou or Mrs Worton-Geer via the school office.

Our reception and nursery classes strive to ensure that every child makes good progress. We plan learning and development opportunities around the needs and interests of each individual child. We also aim to ensure that there is a happy partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working in Nursery and Reception to take on the opportunity of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents and all school staff work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up” (DFE 2017)

## Principles and Aims

There are four principles that underpin the provision provided in our EYFS:

Every child is a **unique child**. We aim to support children to grow as resilient, capable, confident and self-assured pupils.

Children learn through building **positive relationships**. We aim to support children in developing respect, good listening skills, caring and independent.

Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**. We work hard to ensure that children's individual needs and experiences are encapsulated in the planning and delivering of learning opportunities. Through strong parent partnerships and classroom observations we are able to plan activities which both engage and challenge our children.

Children develop and learn in different ways and in their own time. We aim to support the children's **learning and development** through allowing opportunities to explore, make decisions, build connections, be active, be thoughtful and feel challenged.

At St Paul's we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

## Learning and Development

The early learning goals are the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the end of the Reception year.

The seven areas of learning and development in total, comprising of three prime areas and four specific areas:

### **Three Prime Areas**

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
  - Physical Development
- Communication, Language and Literacy

### **Four Specific Areas**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Art and Design

At St Paul's we believe all seven areas are of equal importance. All of the areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

## **Planning**

Our EYFS team plan the curriculum in three stages:

### **Long Term Planning**

Our long term plans aim to provide structure and coherence to the curriculum. The early learning goals are distributed across the year to ensure broad and balanced coverage. Every half term we immerse ourselves in a new topic. Six topics are explored and taught throughout the year. We teach the topics in a two year cycle (12 in total) this is because we want continuity with Nursery and Reception. A child who has been with us from Nursery to Reception would have experienced all 12 topics.

### **Medium Term Planning**

Our medium term plans outline particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities, and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified. These medium term plans are made available to all members of staff working in the EYFS to inform them of the journey the children will be going on during that particular half term.

### **Short Term Planning**

To meet the learning needs of the children on a weekly and day-to-day basis, the EYFS team identify specific learning objectives and activities that highlight how to implement effective differentiation strategies. Short term plans may also outline the deployment of adults and resources. Interventions will also be included in our weekly plans.

Teaching and Learning is monitored in line with the school's monitoring cycle by senior and middle leaders. We also have an EYFS Governor who monitors EYFS across the year. Our Early Years Leader is in the EY team and works closely with all the adults on a daily basis, monitoring and making improvements when needed.

## **Assessment**

Within our EYFS, two types of assessment are used:

### **Formative assessment**

This type of assessment informs everyday planning. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations and other focused assessments e.g. examples of work and photographs. Tapestry is the online learning journal we use in our EY, this is where we store evidence of progress. This evidence is used by class teachers to monitor their children's progress towards meeting the statements from the 'Early Years Outcomes'.

### **Summative assessment**

At the end of the Reception year the EYFS Profile is completed which provides information of a child's knowledge and understanding. Tapestry reflects the on-going observations and assessments which have been made during the year. Evaluations are made in each of the seven areas of learning, assessing against the early learning goals criteria.

Each child will be assessed as either 'meeting expected levels', 'exceeding expected levels' or not yet reaching expected levels (emerging) in each of the seven areas of learning.

## **Tapestry**

Evidence of the progress children make in the EYFS at St Paul's is collected in a learning journal called Tapestry.

Tapestry is an easy-to-use and secure online learning journal helping staff and families celebrate their children's learning and development. Tapestry builds a very special record of a child's experiences, development and learning journey through their early years and primary education.

Evidence can include samples of work, contributions from home, short observations or pupil's voice. Each child should have at least one new piece of evidence added to their journal per week, enabling the EYFS team to build a comprehensive picture of the child's learning and progress.

Each addition to the journal may be annotated with the relevant area of learning, if it was obtained during an adult led activity or a child initiated activity, which characteristics of effective learning were observed, the age band in which the piece of evidence fits and which adult obtained the piece of evidence.

### **Structure of the Day**

At St Paul's we split our EYFS timetable into adult directed time (focus activity) and child initiated time which the children know as 'Play and Learning' (PAL), as recommended in the OFSTED research document 'Bold Beginnings the Reception curriculum in a sample of good and outstanding primary schools.'

### **The Learning Environment**

We aim to create a welcoming and stimulating learning environments which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through independent first-hand experiences. Children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the school day. The learning environment is divided into different zones in order to fully support all seven areas of learning. Our outdoor area reflects the seven areas of learning and is a mirror image of our classrooms so children understand that the outdoor environment is full of learning opportunities. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

### **Home/school Links**

We recognise that parents are the child's first educators. We therefore aim to develop working partnerships between parents, carers and staff. When these partnerships are in place, we recognise the positive impact on a child's development.

We will strive to ensure that parents' feel valued, respected, involved and are included and kept informed throughout their children's learning journey in the EYFS.

This is achieved through a variety of actions including

- Encouraging parents to speak with the EYFS team to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner
- Encouraging parents to provide written comments in their child's reading record book each night (Reception only)
- Providing learning tasks to be completed at home
- Providing an annual written report to parents in July summarizing the child's progress against the early learning goals

### **Equal Opportunities**

At St Paul's we provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

### **Inclusion**

Children with additional educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. The school's SEND co-ordinator is

responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.

### **Safeguarding and welfare**

Please refer to our school's Safeguarding Policy and Health and Safety Policy.

