



Our Lady of Lourdes
Catholic Primary School

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2023 to 2024

Signed Electronically by Chair of Governors <i>J Curran</i>	Name: Joan Curran	Date: 05.10.2023
Signed Electronically by Head: <i>O Bell</i>	Name: Oliver Bell	Date: 05.10.2023
Ratified by Governing Body on: 05.10.2023		Next Review: First FGB in next 2024 academic year

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Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Part 1: EIA Screening

Policies, Procedures or Practices	Early Years Foundation Stage Policy	Date	04.10.2023
EIA CARRIED OUT BY:	Oliver Bell	EIA APPROVED BY:	Joan Curran

Groups that may be affected:

Are there any concerns that the policy could have a different impact on any of the following groups? (please tick the relevant boxes)	Existing or potential adverse impact	Existing or potential for positive impact
Age (young people, the elderly: issues surrounding protection and welfare, recruitment, training, pay, promotion)	All groups will be treated fairly and equally, with no bias, discrimination or preferential treatment.	All groups will be treated fairly and equally, with no bias, discrimination or preferential treatment.
Disability (physical and mental disability, learning difficulties; issues surrounding access to buildings, curriculum and communication).	As above	As above
Gender Reassignment (transsexual)	As above	As above
Marriage and civil partnership	As above	As above
Pregnancy and maternity	As above	As above
Racial Groups (consider: language, culture, ethnicity including gypsy/traveler groups and asylum seekers)	As above	As above
Religion or belief (practices of worship, religious or cultural observance, including non-belief)	As above	As above
Gender (male, female)	As above	As above
Sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bisexual; actual or perceived)	As above	As above

Any adverse impacts are explored in a Full Impact Assessment.

At Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, we seek to create a unique and enabling community whereby children and staff are encouraged to journey beyond their expectations – academically, socially and spiritually – within a culture based on Gospel Values.

Love, Live and Learn as Jesus Taught Us

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.) Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The Early Years Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a sound foundation for future learning. It is a period of rapid growth and development, during which children discover a great deal about themselves and the world around them.

Aims and Objectives:

Overall our aim is to nurture naturally curious children by ensuring that learning is based on enjoyment and challenge. Play is the basis upon which we build children's confidence to explore, investigate and make sense of their world. We aim to give all children the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life. We achieve this by:

- Making learning fun
- Challenging and offering the opportunity to investigate
- Providing access to a variety of play experiences throughout all areas of the curriculum
- Giving children ownership of their activities and learning
- Planning a broad and balanced curriculum, with a focus on developing children's skills and knowledge
- Children actively participating in new learning opportunities
- Children's confidence developing, and encouraging them to express their opinions
- Identifying special educational needs early and catering for their specific needs
- Developing a positive disposition towards their learning
- Developing a close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child being included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four principles:

- **A Unique Child** - every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** - children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling Environments** - 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/carers.
- **Learning and Development** - children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

A Unique Child:

We recognise 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 positive praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies and house points, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. We develop the children's independence and resilience, reinforced through a whole school metacognition approach. All of the children's achievements are recognised, shared and celebrated to promote confidence and self-esteem. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from as well as the wider world.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs and Disability:

All children are valued in our school. They 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. 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.

Children's Needs:

Children need a safe and secure environment, in which the contributions of all are valued. A structured daily routine is provided to help them feel secure and happy. The rooms are organised to be safe, enabling them to move, play and have quiet time. We understand that young children need patience, time and support. It is important for the adults working with young children to realise when to intervene and when to leave the children to continue uninterrupted and thereby not spoiling their concentration and flow. We recognise that children develop at different rates and this is reflected in the weekly planning. The Early Years experiences build on what the children already know and can do, extending their knowledge, experience and interest, and developing their self-esteem and confidence. Teachers use a variety of teaching strategies based on the learning needs of the children and provide a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children to help them to learn effectively. We monitor children's progress and use this as the basis of our planning, to ensure that we provide support where necessary and also provide challenge for those children whose ability and understanding is above age-related expectation.

Safeguarding and Welfare:

It is vital that our children are safe in school. We aim to create an environment that is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. We educate the children on the boundaries and rules within school and help them to understand the reasons behind these. The children take an active part in creating a class 'Mission Statement'. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about the effects of eating too many sweet things and the importance of brushing your teeth. The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Positive Relationships:

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. All EYFS staff aim to develop strong and supportive relationships with all of the children. The EYFS teachers, with the EYFS TAs, act as 'Key Persons' to all children in EYFS. We also aim to build caring, positive and supportive relationships with the children's families.

Parents as partners:

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. This is promoted through our 'Home/School Partnership Agreement'. We also recognise that parents and carers are the children's primary educators and value their contributions. They are encouraged to visit the school prior to their child starting and are invited to attend induction sessions with their child in the summer term before their child begins school. There is also an induction meeting for parents at which they are able to meet their child's class teacher and begin to form their partnership. Parents are given various documents outlining lots of useful information at the induction meeting. Parents are able to see their child's learning journey through website updates and parent meetings. Weekly home learning challenges are also provided, to help the parents in supporting their child's learning at home. There are several parent information sessions throughout the year, in which we provide information about areas of the curriculum. These focus on phonics, reading, writing and maths. We also encourage parents to come into school to help with a variety of activities including reading, 'wow days' and school trips. The school operates an 'Open Door Policy' and parents are always welcome to discuss their child with their class teacher, especially if there are issues that may affect their time in school. We make an effort to be as visible as possible for our parents at the start and end of each school day.

We also hold a Reception Parent Celebration at the end of the children's first term with us, to celebrate the joint effort between home and school that have helped children settle at the beginning of their time with us. There are two parent consultation evenings during the year, during which individual children's progress is discussed. Parents also receive an end of year report on their child's attainment and progress. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities at the end of their Reception year.

Enabling Environments:

We aim to create a stimulating learning environment which allows children to feel confident and secure whilst also providing challenge. Our understanding of the cohort and assessment, helps us to plan and set up an environment based on children's next steps. We think carefully about children's needs and interests to engage them and make learning accessible for all. Children thrive in both the indoor and outdoor area, where provision is modelled and prime areas of development are targeted. We encourage children to become independent and creative learners and our classroom, resources and accessibility supports this. Areas of the classroom and resources are changed or enhanced each term to aid the development of children's skills and knowledge.

Children direct their own learning during continuous provision, with staff providing enhanced provision to extend and develop learning. Staff also enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning through quality interactions and careful use of sustained shared thinking. There is a balance between child-initiated, adult-initiated and adult-led activities.

Learning and Development:

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 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

These seven areas of learning and development shape the educational programmes in early years. This provides the building blocks of our EYFS curriculum. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. 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 later in KS1. However, our EYFS and Year 1 team work closely together to ensure a smooth transition between the year groups, where play-based continuous provision and similar environments can be seen.

Communication and Language:

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. We provide activities and opportunities in which the children can communicate in a wide range of situations; where they can listen and respond to adults and each other, and practise and extend their range of vocabulary. We provide a language-rich environment for our children, with importance placed on reading to and with the children frequently. Role play is also a key feature of this learning.

Physical Development:

Children's fine and gross motor skills are developed through play and structured tasks. We provide opportunities for the children to play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts, a range of different tools in order to develop control and confidence. They also have access to a range of activities to develop gross motor skills such as bats and balls, balancing equipment, balance and peddle bikes, and climbing equipment. They learn how to take part in games, gymnastics and dance-based activities, and have a specific PE session taught once a week by a specialised PE teacher.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

We provide opportunities for children to become valued members of their class and the school, and we help them develop a positive sense of themselves, with confidence in their own abilities. We teach the children how to co-operate and work harmoniously alongside each other, in order to form positive relationships with others and develop respect for all. We help the children to learn how to look after their bodies, including what they need to do to be healthy and safe. The children are taught the skills of independence and resilience, through our whole school metacognition approach. There are weekly taught sessions, following the Jigsaw scheme of work. Children are also introduced to our whole school 'Zones of Regulation' emotional framework approach, which supports them in identifying and managing their own emotions.

Literacy:

The children have access to a wide range of reading materials and a love for reading is instilled in them. We read to the children frequently and ensure that we choose quality texts to share with

them, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry. They have frequent visits to the school library, where they share a story with the librarian before choosing a book to take home. We also ensure that our reading area is welcoming and contains a range of high-quality texts for the children to access. We teach children to link sounds and letters, and to begin to read and write. We base our phonics teaching on 'Read Write Inc.' to develop the children's early reading skills, including sound and letter recognition, segmenting and blending and letter formation.

We provide the children with school reading books to practise at home from Term 1 and ensure that these are matched to their current phonic level. We provide a range of writing materials both inside the classroom and in the outdoor environment, to encourage the children's independent writing, as well as planning adult guided sessions to support this.

Mathematics:

The children develop a strong grounding in number which is an essential building block to excel mathematically. They develop their understanding of number, measurement, pattern and shape & space through practical tasks and discussion. The children receive daily maths inputs, and complete a mixture of adult-directed and independent tasks. Through these experiences, the children learn to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. There are also opportunities to develop their spatial reasoning skills. They also learn to record their ideas at an independent level appropriate to their stage of development.

Understanding the World:

The curriculum provides opportunities for the children to make sense of their physical world and community. They solve problems, experiment and question in a varied range of contexts and explore and find out about their environment and people and places that have significance in their lives. We provide opportunities for personal experiences such as visits to libraries or shops, and meeting important members of society such as firefighters. We also read a range of stories and non-fiction books that help to foster the children's understanding of the diverse world in which they live. The children have the opportunity to develop their Computing skills using a range of play-based and focused activities across the curriculum. They have access to a range of technological toys and resources including computers, Beebots and iPads.

Expressive Art and Design:

The children take part in a variety of art, design and technology, movement, dance and imaginative role-play activities to develop their ability to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings. They are given opportunities to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. They also have a specific music session taught once a week.

Religious Education:

This area of the curriculum is specific to us as a Catholic School. We follow the school policy and teach from Diocesan resources based on the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. We are aware that children of this age are beginning their journey into faith and this may be their first opportunity to hear the good news of the Gospel. Prayer and reflection is an important aspect of the school day, with opportunities for children to take an active part being offered to all. Each classroom has a reflection area, where children are encouraged to spend time talking to God. The children take part in daily collective worship.

Characteristics of Learning:

Whilst planning activities and learning opportunities, we also reflect on the different ways in which children learn. The three 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' 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.
- Creating and Thinking Critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Assessment:

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. The process begins with visits to the Pre-school and nursery settings, meeting the children and discussing each child with the practitioners. We value the input of parents' views and comments in building the profile for each child. Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). Formative assessment occurs throughout the year. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. We use Floorbooks and the class page on the school website, to capture some of the children's learning and achievements in school. Staff also use their professional judgement and knowledge of the children when assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development. Children's development is discussed in termly pupil progress meetings, during which any children who are not 'on track' are identified and next steps are considered. Any individual concerns regarding progress are discussed with parents and steps are put in place to support the child. In the final term of the year, 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 and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority. This information is discussed with the child's Year 1 teacher, to support a successful transition to key stage 1.

Conclusion:

We endeavour to encourage and sustain young children's interests; to empower them to become motivated learners with a desire to continue learning; to help children take their first educational steps positively and to meet the wider world of education with confidence. We want all children to be happy and enjoy their early experiences in school, and through this develop a positive attitude to school and an enthusiasm for learning, whilst developing a respectful and caring attitude towards others.