



EYFS Teaching & Learning Policy

The Intent, Implementation and Impact of our EYFS Curriculum at St. Cross Catholic Primary School

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to statutory guidance and legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2016
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- [Standards and Testing Agency (STA) (2020) 'Early years foundation stage profile']

Intent

At St. Cross we provide a broad and balanced EYFS curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates and we support each child to reach their full potential.

It is every child's right to grow up safe and healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five outcomes.

At St. Cross Catholic Primary School, a member of St Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy, we intend to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment, which is sensitive to the needs of the child including children with additional needs.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enable choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions.
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive rather than parallel.

Teaching and Learning Times:

Reception 8:35 a.m. – 12:00am. 13:15p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Implementation

Throughout Reception at St. Cross Catholic Primary School, we follow the Early Years Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, updated March 2017, by the DfE. This framework specifies the requirement for learning and development in the Early Years and provides prime and specific areas of learning we must cover in our curriculum.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A Unique Child**

At St. Cross 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 and 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 and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.

- **Positive Relationships**

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

- **Enabling Environments**

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

- **Learning and Development**

The Reception Class is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas that reflect each area of the early years' curriculum.

We recognise that all children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in the EYFS to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning ensuring that parents and guardians and staff work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their charge.

Learning and development is categorised into three **prime areas** of learning:

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

Additionally, there are four **specific areas** of learning:

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

Achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning is by:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically.

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Impact

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve or exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives.

At St. Cross Catholic Primary School, we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as a part of life.

It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

EYFS Policy

Observation, Assessment and Planning

We aim to meet the needs of our children so that most achieve or exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. All staff working in the EYFS are involved in this process.

We plan with the child in mind ensuring that the activities set are matched to individual children's abilities as well as being centred on their interests.

Assessment

From September 2023 children entering Reception at St. Cross will be required to participate in a statutory baseline assessment (RBA).

This will be carried out within the first 6 weeks of children starting school.

It will be an activity-based assessment of pupils' starting point in:

- language, communication and literacy
- mathematics

The assessment will be age-appropriate, last approximately 20 minutes and the teacher will record the results on a laptop, computer or tablet. It will not be used to label or track individual pupils. No numerical score will be shared and the data will only be used at the end of Year 6 to form the school-level progress measure.

However, the teacher will receive a series of short, narrative statements that tell them how their pupils performed in the assessment at that time. These can be used to inform teaching within the first term.

The Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) is an evidence-based oral language intervention for children in nursery and reception who show weakness in their oral language skills and who are therefore at risk of experiencing difficulty with reading. It is delivered over 30 weeks by teaching assistants in groups of three to four children.

Following this baseline assessment, The Foundation Stage Profile will be used to assess children throughout their time in the EYFS. This is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage.

Throughout the school year, we make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. The teacher completes an assessment regularly, and then updates half termly using the Target Tracker System.

At the end of the year, we record each child's level of development against the 17 Early Learning Goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. This will be reported to parents/guardians. A summary of these assessments is also reported to the Local Authority for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead.

We share this information at parent meetings and in the end-of-year report. The children's work is recorded in their 'Learning Journals' and their exercise books.

These contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents/guardians. Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress.

Learning Through Play

Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

At St. Cross Catholic Primary School, children learn through planned play activities and staff will decide when child-initiated or adult-led activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities.

Our Environment

Reception consists of one spacious classroom and a large contained outdoor area. There is one member of teaching staff and two teaching assistant working within the EYFS. All members of staff form strong, positive relationships with each child.

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the children's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer as well as more structured activities, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

Intimate Care

'Intimate' care is any care associated with bodily functions, bodily products and personal hygiene. Depending on a child's stage of development, they may need some support with tasks such as dressing and undressing, using the toilet, cleaning/wiping/washing intimate parts of the body following an 'accident'.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. The school's SEN Co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual.

The Role of Parents

We believe that all parents and carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- Giving children the opportunity to spend time with staff in the EYFS before starting school by a series of transition visits including staff visiting nurseries if appropriate.
- Providing up to date information about the school via our website.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Target Tracker – software which is used to records children's progress and allows communication between school and home.