

St William of York Catholic Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Signed _____ Chair of Governors

_____ Head Teacher

Date: 23rd November 2023

Review date: November 2025

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Intent

“Nothing but joy!” Loris Malaguzzi

St William of York Catholic Primary School is committed to the highest possible quality of education and childcare in our Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that all children learn and develop at different times. Our duty is to cater for children’s individual interests and needs; enabling every child to reach their full potential and to ensure lifelong learning.

We intend to:

- Create an environment that is irresistible, satisfying and provoking.
- Understand every child’s personal attributes and attitudes, enabling children to take their own learning further.
- Develop confidence, self esteem, self awareness and independence in all children.
- Provide a balance of child initiated and adult led activities.
- Establish a system of planning, assessment and reporting which involves all stakeholders, therefore informing learning and development within the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Ensure the quality of our provision is constant and based on high expectations.
- Involve families and make links with the local community wherever possible.
- Encourage a love of reading and early mathematics.
- promote a strong sense of health and well-being through skills and a supportive, nurturing environment.

Implementation

“Tell me and I’ll forget. Teach me and I’ll remember. Involve me and I’ll learn.” Benjamin Franklin

- Environment

“There are three teachers of children: adults, other children and the physical environment.” Loris Malaguzzi

The environments in our Nursery and Reception Class are designed to create a ‘home from home’ feeling.

As soon as our children enter our setting, we are enabling them to be fully immersed in their own learning. Our environment offers the opportunity for children to be independent, whilst feeling safe and secure with an understanding that it is good to learn from and alongside each other.

We offer a wide range of experiences; including open ended loose parts play, sensory activities for our youngest children, popular culture play and topic based activities.

We provide these opportunities to allow children to develop their intrinsic motivation, self regulation and a desire to learn.

- Curriculum

“ Children have real understanding only of that which they invent themselves.” Jean Piaget

In St William of York Early Years Foundation Stage, we are committed to following the EYFS curriculum whilst following the interests of individual children and supporting their personal needs. We value the world in which we live and we are aware of how different cultures, faiths and beliefs make our world a more interesting place in which to live. This enables children to have a clearer understanding of ‘Cultural Capital’ as they progress through the school.

Our children are introduced to staff through home visits and visits to our setting. The home visit is extremely valuable as it immediately makes vital links with school and home. Staff are able to meet the children in their own home environment, where they feel safe and secure. This enables children to be more confident when they come to visit, prior to starting.

All children are different and we pride ourselves on how we work with families in order to provide the most positive experience for the individual child.

- Staff

Staff are keen to adopt new ways of learning according to recent research. There is a ‘have a go’ culture which permeates through every interaction between staff and children.

We are passionate about getting to know our families and working closely with them to provide the most irresistible opportunities for our children.

Our staff are driven by a strong belief in a supportive, inclusive and an enabling environment. All staff are highly qualified and experienced in child care and development.

Impact

*“The best teachers are those who show you where to look, but don’t tell you what to see.”
Alexandra K Trenfor*

As a result of an ambitious, progressive and exciting Early Years curriculum , our children have a positive awareness of themselves and their role in their family and the wider community.

We are committed to all children, including those who are disadvantaged or with special educational needs and disabilities, being able to succeed and to be prepared for their future.

We are continuously assessing and reviewing our practice. We know that our practice will change depending on the cohort and individual children. We monitor the impact of our curriculum through regular audits, team meetings, Early Years staff meetings and the opportunities to develop our own personal development.

Staff observe, watch and learn through close observations of children’s play and development, providing the information which will develop our ‘ in the moment’ planning.

Subject Leadership is carried out by the Early Years Manager through discussions with staff and children, lesson observations and book monitoring.

Pupil progress meetings with the Headteacher ensure that all children are monitored and provision is set to ensure that no child is left behind.

Broad Guidelines

Every member of the Early Years Team should:

- Have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage Guidelines (2021)
- Be competent in their knowledge of Child Development.
- Understand how to observe and plan for individual children, enabling them to reach their full potential.
- Recognise the importance of 'Planned, Purposeful Play.'
- Recognise the importance of a 'Key Person' system and implement this into daily routine.
- Use all forms of assessment to monitor the development of our youngest children.
- Be aware of the importance of Transition, on entry, during and on exit of Foundation Stage.
- Include all children and cater for individual needs and requirements.
- Develop strong links with parents, the extended family, child minders and other settings.
- Acknowledge the importance of routine to very young children and maintain this on a daily basis.
- Be fully aware of safeguarding procedures, especially with regard to autonomous self-care.
- Respect and value parental knowledge of children, working in partnership to provide opportunities for lifelong learning
- Be a part of Early Years developments and research and implement into daily routine within Foundation Stage.
- Aim to share our vision with the wider community and foster a lifelong love of learning amongst all.

Guidelines

The revised 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage,' statutory from September 2021 states that,

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age 5 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."

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child

- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

1. A Unique Child

At St William of York, we acknowledge every child as an individual learner. Learning is personalised and sustained through observations and by carefully planning activities, based on the needs and interests of individual children. We recognise that all children are entitled to an excellent, high quality education and a safe, positive learning environment.

2. Positive Relationships

We understand that young children are able to form positive, meaningful relationships and attachments with up to five or six adults. At St William of York we value the Key Person system, enabling individual children to become familiar with one adult in the settings. Each child's Key Person is responsible for maintaining and developing positive relationships with the child and their families including Grandparents, Child minders and Extended Families.

3. Enabling Environments

The Foundation Stage environment at St William of York changes to suit the needs of individual children. Stability and security is evident from the areas of continuous provision. However, the environment is changed due to the nature of enhancements required through individual observations. Staff are adept at working alongside families, other settings and the wider community for the benefit of the children in their care.

4. Learning and Development

Learning and Development is a balance between child initiated and adult led activities. Sustained, shared thinking is crucial to promote personalised learning. Individual needs are catered for through our Key Person system, Observations and detailed Planning and Evaluations.

Aims

This policy aims 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.

Legislation

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

Structure of the EYFS

Our Early Years department consists of provision from 2 to 5 years old.

2 Year old funding is available, offering five sessions each week- mornings or afternoons

Children can start in our Nursery the day after they become 3 years old.

Every child is entitled to 15 hours of Nursery Education each week.

A choice of sessions is offered. (5 mornings or 5 afternoons / 2.5 days at the start of the week / 2.5 days at the end of the week)

We also provide 30 hour provision where children can attend all sessions and stay for their lunch.

Our Reception Class is for children who have become 4 years old on 1st September that year.

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 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

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Alongside the Prime and Specific Areas of learning, we also acknowledge the individual child's learning strategies. We recognise that children all learn in different ways and at different rates. This knowledge gives staff an insight as to how to plan for their next steps. A summative statement will be given to Year 1 staff at the end of the child's Reception year. This will inform the child's next teacher about the individual child and *how* they learn.

- Playing and Exploring – Engagement
- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

- Active Learning – Motivation
- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping on trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

- Creating and Thinking Critically – Thinking
- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

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.

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

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff 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, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

The Planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests, current events, festivals and celebrations, the seasons, and ideas taken from the children. Our weekly planning is Literacy based and is driven by the developmental needs of the children. We make frequent assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observations, and this involves the Early Years practitioners and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's individual 'Learning Journey' books. They also contain information provided by parents.

At St William of York Catholic Primary School, we record judgements against the EYFS Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded using the *Development Matters Age Related Expectations*. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written report to parents, reporting their progress against the 17 Early Learning Goals

Assessment

At St William of York, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

When a child is **aged between 2 and 3**, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

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.

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 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.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

"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."

At St William of York Catholic Primary 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.

We endeavour to meet these requirements:

- Promote the welfare 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 are 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.
- We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by ,for example by talking to children about:

The effects of eating too many sweet things

The importance of brushing your teeth

We follow [statutory guidance](#) for safety around supervised tooth brushing.

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

Inclusion

St William of York strives to be an inclusive school, engendering a sense of community and belonging through its:

- inclusive ethos
- broad and balanced curriculum for all children
- systems for early identification of barriers to learning and participation
- high expectations and suitable targets for all.

All children are observed and assessed thoroughly throughout their time in St William of York Foundation Stage. Once staff have identified that an individual child may need additional support within the setting, the school SENCO and/or PSA is informed. Staff will always work alongside parents to ensure that their child is supported in their learning and development.

Transition

Every child is unique and this applies to moments of 'Transition.' Moving from Nursery to Reception and Reception to Year One can sometimes be overwhelming for our youngest children and staff are passionate about the importance of recognising these changes.

- Transition from Nursery to Reception is managed through visits to the Reception Classroom, starting in the Summer Term, with some provision for enhanced transition for some children should this be necessary.

- Parents and families are included in the transition process through Home Visits prior to starting Nursery/Reception.
- Visits are encouraged and ‘Stay and Play’ sessions are also a valuable way of developing relationships between children, families and school.
- Sefton has a transition event to hand over information between private and maintained nurseries.
- A Transition document is shared with relevant staff.
- A parents meeting is held to share information and to enable families to visit our setting.
- Year 1 staff visit children in Reception prior to moving up to Year 1.
- Information about Year 1 is also conveyed to families.
- Enhanced transition is also available for Year 1 children should they require it.
- Continuous Provision is paramount in Year 1 to allow many children to continue to learn through play. This is essential to meet the ever changing needs of our children and will vary depending on the needs of the cohort.

There are many ways that children settle into a new stage of their early education. We are flexible and understanding and at St William of York we pride ourselves on ‘Parent Partnership.’

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Early Years Co-ordinator- E Bryning and Headteacher- M. Murphy every two years.

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

OFSTED – December 2018

We were inspected in December 2018 and below are some of the findings relating to our Early Years department.

“Children in early years flourish. Parents are full of praise for the ways in which staff care for their children, build their confidence and help them learn new things each day. By the end of Reception, children’s attainment remains below average. However, from starting points that are below, and sometimes well below, what is typical for their age, the children make good strides in their development. In 2018, the proportion of children attaining the good level of development needed to be ready for Year 1 increased.

The teaching of writing begins promptly in early years, with the youngest children having many opportunities to make marks in different media, such as foam, sand and snow. They become increasingly competent in controlling brushes, crayons and pens. As they get older, Nursery children enjoy writing their names and the different letters they have learned. In Reception, the children use writing in a range of situations.

As in the rest of the school, reading is taught well in early years.”

Inclusion

Observation, Assessment and Planning

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*Parents are invited into school to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher at **any** time.*

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

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 Emergency Evacuation & Lockdown 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
Procedures for changing children/toilet training	See Intimate Care Policy
Procedures for visiting children in their homes before starting Nursery or School	See EYFS Home Visits Policy