



# ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

### **Mission Statement**

"I called you by your name, you are mine." Isaiah 43

The mission of our school is to support and further the teachings of Christ and His Church.

We welcome and embrace individuals of all abilities and cultural backgrounds.

We aim to enhance and celebrate their moral, physical, social and emotional development, so that they may reach their full potential in an atmosphere of stability, care and respect.

We believe that education is for all and in partnership with parents, carers, children and the wider Catholic community: we will strive and succeed in a wholly inclusive setting.

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## Our EYFS Vision:



*At St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School we believe that every **unique child** deserves the best possible start in life through **positive relationships** and an **environment** that **enables** them to fulfill their potential.*

## Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School, children join the Reception class in the year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children *"learn and develop well and kept healthy and safe."* We aim to support children in their learning through *"teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life."* (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A unique child** - developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- **Positive relationships** - supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- **Enabling environments** - where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- **Learning and developing** - An acknowledgement that children 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 praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

## **Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEND)**

All children and their families are valued at St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School. Children 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. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. 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 and the schools SENCo is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEND.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

## **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements**

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children (see Whole School Safeguarding Children policy).

*"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. Augustine of Canterbury 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 2014. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding 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 is 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.

### **Positive Relationships**

At St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong independent individuals from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- giving the children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher and the class in the summer term before starting school during transfer sessions;
- hosting an informal 'Stay and Play' in term 6;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during term 1 of the child's Reception year for a 'housekeeping' meeting in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading and phonics;
- talking to parents individually about their child before their child starts in our school;
- providing the opportunity for the children to explore the classroom environment individually and to meet the practitioners;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress individually with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year and have the opportunity to discuss these if requested;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: EYFS workshops for literacy and mathematics, celebration assemblies, school visits, family forest school sessions, career days etc;
- providing parents an opportunity to contribute to assessments and celebrate their child's learning and development by completing "wow" cards which inform planning and provision;

- written contact through home school diary;
- ensuring all parents know that their child's teacher and teaching assistant are their key workers and
- by providing a quiet and confidential area where parents are able to discuss any concerns.

### **Enabling Environments**

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following the children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual learning journeys.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

### **Learning and Development**

Teachers and teaching assistants provide the curriculum in the reception classes of up to a class size of 30 children.

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas." The prime areas are

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

The specific areas are

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

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern,

staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the SENCo in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

At St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School:

*"Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must 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, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1."* (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

Planning and guided activities will take into account the different ways that children learn and these will be reflected in practice. At St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These 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; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2014)

Religious Education is also taught in the reception class following the 'Come and See' programme (see RE policy).

### **Equal Opportunities**

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

### **Health and Safety**

At St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, an annual risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS (see EYFS risk assessment) and in the staff handbook, safeguarding and child protection policies, there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children. The EYFS risk assessment must be read in conjunction with other relevant whole school policies.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2014, at St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School we undertake;

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. (See Policy for handling medicines).
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- Children in the EYFS have a healthy snack provided in accordance with the Medway fruit for school scheme. EYFS staff have liaised with the school member of staff who has received level 2 food hygiene training.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see accident and injury policy). The EYFS teacher is emergency first aid trained and the teaching assistant is paediatric first aid trained. There are additional members of staff on premises who also hold a paediatric first aid certificate. The EYFS holds the level 3 Forest school qualification.
- Behaviour is managed in accordance to whole school policy (see Inclusions policy, behaviour policy, physical restraint policy)
- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy
- Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use. The EYFS classroom has a phone to contact the office and other classrooms in the school (see safeguarding policy).
- Staff are expected to wear clothing that supports them in getting to a child's level and playing and engaging with children at floor level.
- Mobile phones should be switched off/silent and not be visible during teaching time within the EYFS classroom or in the outdoor area (see e-safety policy and staff/volunteer user agreements). Cameras on mobile phone devices are never to be used to take images/recordings of children.

## Transition

### **From Pre-school/Feeder settings**

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition:

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and times and routines, and any concerns they may want to express.
- The "All about me" booklets, received from previous settings are read to offer an insight into the children's likes and interests. These are used during the Autumn term to support transition and to inform planning and can be found in the front of the learning journey.
- The children are invited to visit their reception class following the induction meeting for parents. They are offered times and days to visit again with parents and one of their new classmates to get to know the class and each other. [A Stay and Play session takes place so that all the children and parents can spend some time getting to know one another.](#)
- Members of staff from St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary school make visits to feeder settings where possible. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support or are part of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process.

### **From Reception Class to Key Stage 1**

To enable a smooth transition from Reception to Year 1 the children in EYFS have opportunities for 'free-flow' child initiated learning between the Year R classroom, the outdoor area and the Year 1 classroom. This 'free-flow' is timetabled throughout the year to support both the year 1 children in their new classroom and the Reception children in preparing for year 1.

During the summer term the Reception children will have frequent contact with the Year 1 teacher during these 'free-flow' sessions. They will also have a more formal 'meet the teacher' whereby they spend time with the teacher in the classroom.

### **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against the Early Learning Goals, and their readiness for Year 1.



The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. From September 2016, there will be no statutory reporting of attainment in the EYFS to the Local Authority or DFE, however the Early Learning Goals will remain statutory.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

Parents are provided with a written report at the end of Reception which will have the attainment towards the ELG's included.

Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.