

Early Years Policy



St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

Mission Statement:

To love, serve and learn as Jesus shows us

DOCUMENT STATUS

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Statement of intent

At St Vincent's Catholic Primary School, we greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development. From the very beginning of their journey of learning, growth and development, children are able to live out our Mission Statement: To love, serve and learn as Jesus shows us.

We recognise that we are all learners, striving for excellence in all that we do and responsible for our own growth and that of those around us. We create a culture of openness, collaboration, evaluation, and challenge where everyone can enjoy success and flourish because they as individuals are valued as part of our school family.

We provide a knowledge-rich curriculum through which children develop the skills, knowledge and values to become life-long learners. We enable children to become fully human, with a strong sense of self, both as a person and as a learner, created unique and individual by God.

We believe that exceptional teaching and learning:

- Is inspirational, aspirational, challenging and puts no limitation on potential
- Is informed by collaborative planning, assessment and evaluation
- Is built upon evidence-informed innovation, improvement and development
- Builds knowledge and skills progressively through small steps, from modelled and scaffolded learning, to independent recall and application

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's readiness for the next stage of their education and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents/carers.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

1. Legal framework

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

- Childcare Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2021) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education (2020)'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2015) 'The Prevent duty'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Assessment for Teaching and Learning Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Whole-School Food Policy
- Single Equality Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy
- Supporting children at school with medical conditions and/or health needs
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safer Recruitment and Vetting Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Fire Evacuation Plan

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for:

- Ensuring there is a policy in place to safeguard children that includes an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child, the use of mobile phones and cameras, and staff safeguarding training requirements. These issues are addressed in part in this policy and in further detail in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Acceptable Use Policy and Online Safety Policy.
- Ensuring there is a policy in place in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (including supply staff) or a volunteer. These issues are addressed in the school's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

The EYFS lead, in conjunction with the headteacher, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.

Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.
- Remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.

3. Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Give each child a positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- Provide a challenging and stimulating environment in which children develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally so that they begin to understand the 3 core questions which underpin our curriculum:
 - Who am I?
 - Where do I come from?
 - Who do I aspire to become?
- Teach children to live out our school mission statement, 'to love, serve and learn as Jesus shows us.'
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building strong relationships with adults and peers through the development of social skills.
- Work alongside parents/carers to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.
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Four guiding principles shape our practice:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between the school and parents/carers.
- Learning and development is important. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

To put these principles into practice, we at St Vincent's Catholic Primary School:

- Provide a balanced, stimulating and challenging curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers efficiently through Tapestry Learning Journal
- Plan learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
- Assign each child with a key person to ensure that each child's learning and care is tailored to their individual needs.
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment where children feel valued.

4. Learning and development

In partnership with parents/carers, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

The EYFS curriculum is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development. Activities in school are planned to reflect these interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two important and interconnected sections – prime and specific:

The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening, attention and understanding • Speaking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gross motor skills • Fine motor skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal, social and emotional development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation • Managing self • Building relationships
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The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension • Word reading • Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers • Numerical patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the world <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past and present • People, culture and communities • The natural world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive arts and design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating with materials • Being imaginative and expressive
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In organising and implementing educational programmes, the school will ensure that a broad range of activities and experiences are planned, having regard to three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things.
- Active learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

5. Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.

Parents/carers will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development through the Tapestry Learning Journal, and the EYFS lead will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents/carers.

Ongoing formative assessments are used to assess the day-to-day learning and development of children in the EYFS. Practitioners interact and observe children to understand their level of achievement, using this information to shape learning experiences for each child.

The class teacher will undertake a summative assessment of the level of each child's development at certain stages. These are:

- Reception Baseline Assessment – a short assessment which is taken within the first six weeks of a child starting reception year.
- The EYFS Profile – a comprehensive assessment completed at the end of the EYFS to provide a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the early learning goals (ELGs), and their readiness for Year 1.

The school reports EYFS Profile results to the LA when these are requested. The LA is under a duty to return this data to the relevant government department.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to the assessment process for children with SEND as appropriate.

The EYFS lead will discuss any cause for concern in a child's progress with the child's parents/carers, especially where this concern relates to the prime areas of learning. A strategy of support will be agreed upon and consideration will be taken as to whether the child may have SEND which requires additional support.

The school takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with EAL to use their home language in play and learning whilst also ensuring that these children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English. During assessment, if it is found that a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, the EYFS lead will contact the child's parents/carers to establish their home language skills to establish whether there is cause for concern about a language delay.

6. Inclusion

All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender.

The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace and level of development.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school's SENCO.

7. The learning environment and outdoor spaces

The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment. Children are able to select resources they wish to use in play. They are taught to treat their classroom environment with respect and ensure it is cared for

Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and outdoor activities are planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.

There are toilet facilities available to reception children, spare clothes and underwear are kept nearby in case of accidents.

8. Safeguarding and welfare

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well.

Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

The DSL is Dominic Vernon.

The deputy DSL is Paula Williams.

The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate. The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL. The DSL and deputy DSL will undertake child protection training as required.

Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect.

9. Mobile phones and devices

Use of the school's cameras

Staff are provided with a school device to ensure that only school devices are used to take photographs and videos. School devices must have passcode protection.

School devices must only be used for work related matters, for example recording and documenting a child's learning.

10. Health and safety

The school will promote the good health of children in the EYFS, including the promotion of good oral health.

The EYFS lead will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents/carers on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents/carers. Accidents and injuries will be recorded in an accident book, located in the KS1 and KS2 First Aid cupboards. The headteacher will report any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the school's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.

A first-aid box is located in Key Stage 1 and 2 corridors.

The Health and Safety Policy outlines the full health and safety policies and procedures.

The school has a Fire Evacuation Plan in place.

11. Staffing

St Vincent's Catholic primary School is a single form entry school so class size is limited to 30 children.

Each child is assigned a key person whose role it is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The EYFS lead will inform parents/carers of whom their child's key person is and will explain the role of the key person when their child begins attending the school.

12. Parent/carer involvement

We firmly believe that the EYFS cannot function without the enduring support of parents/carers.

Parents/carers are invited to two parents' evenings in the Autumn and Spring; however, the school has an open-door policy and parents/carers are welcome to talk to teachers at the start and end of the school day. Alternatively, they can arrange to speak to the class teacher by phoning the school office or contacting them on Tapestry

Each child has one 'Focus Week' each half term. During this week parents/carers are handed a form to complete, which informs school of what the child has been enjoying at home and future family plans (such as visits, holidays, events); they will also ask questions or concerns they have about their child's progress which the class teacher will respond to that week through Tapestry.

13. Transition periods

During the Summer Term before a child starts reception at St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School, the class teacher will arrange a visit to the child's nursery, to play with the child and begin to build a relationship. They will also discuss the child's progress and development with their nursery keyworker, asking for key information to be shared and transferred over to form part of the Baseline Assessments made in September.

Following a Parent/Carer welcome meeting, the class teacher will also arrange phone calls with parents/carers to discuss their child and any concerns they have about starting Reception.

The children are invited to two "stay and play" sessions in the Summer Term. The purpose of these visits to be become familiar with their new classrooms environment, and to meet staff who will be working with them, and their new classmates.

The following process is in place to ensure children's successful transition to Year 1:

- Parents/carers are invited to arrange a meeting with the Year 1 teacher to discuss transition to Year 1, to highlight and discuss and changes that children and parents/carers will experiencing in moving into Key Stage 1 and to answer any questions or concerns about this transition.
- The children are invited to a number of visits throughout the year to their Year 1 class.
- In the Summer Term, the children visit at least once without the support of the EYFS staff or parents/carers.
- In the Summer Term, Reception and Year 1 staff will meet to discuss each child's development in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1.

14. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the governing body and the headteacher.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.