



Early Years Policy

Local to St. Felix RC Primary School

Part of the Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi Academy Trust

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Approved by the Committee/Governing body	<i>Teaching, Learning and Standards</i>
Signature of Chair of Governors	
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Mission Statement

As true followers of Jesus learning together, our school strives to be a community where everyone is valued, nurtured and encouraged to reach their full potential and where Christ's teaching guides responsible attitudes towards each other and the wider world.

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Statement of intent

At St Felix, we greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

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 'school readiness' 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.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Childcare Act 2006
 - The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
 - The GDPR
 - Data Protection Act 2018
- 1.2. This policy has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:
 - DfE (2023) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
 - DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education'
 - DfE (2018) 'Working together to safeguard children'
 - DfE (2015) 'The prevent duty'
- 1.3. This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following school policies:
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Administering Medication Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Complaints Procedures Policy
 - Staff Code of Conduct

2. Aims

- 2.1. Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:
 - Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
 - Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
 - Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
 - Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
 - Work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.
- 2.2. 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, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between the school and parents.
 - Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.
- 2.3. To put these principles into practice, the school:
- Provides a balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
 - Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
 - Works in partnership with parents.
 - Plans challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
 - Implements a key person approach to develop close relationships with children.
 - Provides a safe and secure learning environment.

3. Roles and responsibilities

- 3.1. The governing board has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 3.2. The EYFS lead, in conjunction with the Head of School, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- 3.3. The Head of School is responsible for:
- Ensuring staff members understand the school's systems for recording pupil's profile outcomes and submitting data to the LA.
 - Ensuring staff members clearly record EYFS profile information.
 - Ensuring that staff members responsible for data collection and submission understand the nature of EYFS profile data.
 - Accurately transcribing and converting data for the school's records to electronic records.
 - Checking data against information provided by staff members.
 - Ensuring that information that accompanies EYFS profile data is accurate, e.g. postcodes and unique pupil numbers.
 - Checking and signing-off data before its submission to the LA.
- 3.4. The early years leader is responsible for:
- Supporting staff development by providing regular training and CPD opportunities.
 - Ensuring that parents are continuously kept informed regarding the achievements and progress of pupils.

- Maximising parental engagement and community involvement.

3.5. The key person is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the pupil(s) they support receive learning tailored to their needs.
- Engaging with parents to support them in guiding their child's development at home.
- Helping families with more specialist support, where required.
- Helping pupils become familiar with the school and acting as a point of contact for pupils and their parents.

3.6. EYFS staff members are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Having a firm understanding of child development and age-appropriate needs.
- Developing planning that challenges pupils and meets their individual needs.
- Encouraging pupils to effectively communicate in a variety of ways and work collaboratively.
- Supporting pupils in becoming mastery learners.
- Ensuring that the environment is appropriate and safe, as well as being supportive of their learning.
- Providing learning experiences which adhere to the EYFS statutory framework.
- Identifying any areas of concern relating to pupils and their learning, development and emotional needs.
- Ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to safeguard pupils.
- Taking charge of their own personal development, including undergoing additional training, to benefit pupils and the provisions in place to support pupils.

3.7. Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child regularly attends school, giving reasons for any absences.
- Informing the school of any concerns or problems which may affect the child's behaviour, learning or wellbeing.
- Attending parent consultations and having an active role in the school community.
- Ensuring that their child is appropriately dressed.
- Developing their child's knowledge and understanding by continued learning experiences at home.

- Encouraging their child's development and progress.

4. Learning and development

4.1. There are seven areas of learning and development that shape pupils' education. These are split into two groups: prime areas and specific areas.

4.2. The prime areas are:

- **Communication and language**
 - The school gives pupils the opportunity to experience a rich language environment, and to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves.
- **Physical development**
 - The school provides opportunities for pupils to be active and interactive, and to develop their coordination, control and movement. Pupils are helped to understand the importance of physical activity and make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, social and emotional development**
 - The school helps pupils to develop a positive sense of themselves and others to enable them to form positive and respectful relationships. Pupils develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings and behave appropriately in groups, and to be confident in their own abilities.

4.3. The specific areas are:

- **Literacy**
 - The school encourages pupils to link sounds and letters, and to begin to read and write. To assist pupils in doing this, the school gives pupils access to a wide range of reading materials.
- **Mathematics**
 - The school provides pupils with the opportunity to develop their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, and working out simple addition and subtraction problems. Pupils are taught to describe shapes, spaces and measures.
- **Understanding the world**
 - The school guides pupils to make sense of the physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive arts and design**
 - The school enables pupils to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, and provides pupils with the opportunity and encouragement to share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities including art and music.

4.4. **Learning strategies**

- Everyone has their own learning style, and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow everyone to learn in the ways that suit them best, including through the use of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic resources.
- Staff members will ask open-ended questions and challenge pupils to re-examine and extend their understanding of the world.
- Pupils' personal interests will be used as a basis to develop and extend their skills and knowledge by relating learning intentions to pupils' own life experiences.
- All pupils will be encouraged to make and modify plans as a method of ensuring that they review and reflect on their own learning.
- Evaluations of individual pupils' learning will be used to inform future planning.
- Open-ended resources will be utilised to support exploration and critical thinking, as well as providing provocations to enthuse and motivate pupils.
- Learning objectives will be shared with the pupils and parents – setting clear expectations for what pupils are expected to achieve.

4.5. **Learning through play**

- Play is essential to pupils' cognitive, imaginative, creative, emotional and social development. We aim to provide play experiences which have a balance between adult-led and child-initiated play, allowing pupils to explore their own ideas and apply what they have learnt in different situations.
- Pupils will be able to explore at their own pace, but are given consistent boundaries.
- Staff members will be actively engaged in pupils' play, either by undertaking careful observations or by joining in with the pupils in order to develop their activity.

5. Enabling environments

- 5.1. The school recognises that the environment plays an important role in supporting and extending pupils' learning and development.
- 5.2. The school ensures that pupils from all backgrounds are supported and given the opportunity to do well in accordance with our Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 5.3. Arrangements are in place to support pupils with SEND, including appointing a SENCO.
- 5.4. All staff members are responsible for ensuring that the emotional environment is warm and accepting of everyone.
- 5.5. In order to create an environment in which pupils feel confident to try new things, staff members empathise with pupils, support their emotions and ensure they feel valued.
- 5.6. Pupils have access to a range of learning environments, including indoor and outdoor activities, at all times.

- 5.7. The indoor environment contains resources which are age-appropriate, well-maintained and accessible to all children.
- 5.8. All indoor spaces are sufficiently maintained and appropriate for the activities planned in the spaces.
- 5.9. We recognise the positive impact that outdoor learning can have on pupils' wellbeing and development; therefore, we ensure that pupils are given regular opportunities to work outside.
- 5.10. Our outdoor provision incorporates the prime areas of learning, offering pupils the freedom to explore, use their senses and be physically active through:
 - The use of natural materials.
 - Learning about growing and the living world.
 - Research and experimentation.
 - Playing with water.
 - Physical play and movement.
 - Imagination and creativity.
 - Construction and den building.
- 5.11. Learning environments within the school are well organised and suitable for group, individual and whole-class learning – with interactive displays and easily accessible resources utilised to encourage independence.
- 5.12. School rules and expectations of behaviour are consistent throughout the different learning areas and pupils are aware of these.
- 5.13. Educational visits are arranged in order to further expand pupils' learning experiences. Prior to a trip, a risk assessment of the space is carried out and it is ensured that the area is appropriate for the activity and pupils involved.

6. The learning environment and outdoor spaces

- 6.1. The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment.
- 6.2. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and daily outdoor activities are planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.
- 6.3. There are toilet facilities available to the EYFS, and there are hygienic changing facilities containing a supply of towels and spare clothes.

7. Assessment

- 7.1. 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.

- 7.2. Parents will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and the class teachers will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents.
- 7.3. Formative assessments are used to assess the learning and development of children in the EYFS. Staff members will observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. This information will then be used to shape learning experiences for each child.
- 7.4. Reasonable adjustments will be made to the assessment process for children

8. Safeguarding and welfare

- 8.1. All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well.
- 8.2. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.
- 8.3. The DSL is Mrs Andi Dodds
- 8.4. The deputy DSL is Mrs Tracey Naylor

9. Mobile phones and devices

Use of the school's mobile phones and cameras

- 9.1. Staff are provided with a school device to ensure that only school devices are used to take photographs and videos.
- 9.2. School devices must have passcode protection.
- 9.3. School devices must only be used for work related matters.
- 9.4. School devices must only be used to take photographs in the presence of another staff member and only with the consent of the child's parent.
- 9.5. Staff must not take photographs of bruising or injuries for child protection reasons.
- 9.6. Where staff members have concerns over material on a school device, they must report all concerns to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Policy.

10. Health and safety

- 10.1. A first-aid box is located in the Reception classroom.
- 10.2. The EYFS lead will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents.

- 10.3. Accidents and injuries will be recorded on a school incident form and passed to the Head of School

11. Staffing

- 11.1. Tracey Naylor holds at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification alongside at least two years' experience working in an early years setting. At least half of the other EYFS staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.
- 11.2. Sarah Chambers will provide cover for the EYFS lead in their absence and is deemed fully qualified to do so by the EYFS lead and head of school.
- 11.3. There will be at least one member of staff on the school premises at all times who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate.
- 11.4. Any member of staff who has sole responsibility for looking after a group of children will also hold a PFA certificate.
- 11.5. All newly qualified staff with a level 2 or 3 qualification will be PFA trained.
- 11.6. The school will organise PFA training to be renewed every three years.
- 11.7. The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found in the staff room.
- 11.8. The school provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.
- 11.9. Only members of staff with level 2 English and maths qualifications will count towards the staffing ratios at level 3.
- 11.10. The school adopts the following staffing ratios:
- For children aged three and over:
 - Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
 - Where a member of staff does not hold QTS, early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification, there is one member of staff for every eight children. At least one staff member holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification, and at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.
- 11.11. Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios.
- 11.12. Parents will be informed about staffing arrangements and, when relevant and practical, will be involved in staffing arrangement decisions.

12. Parental involvement

- 12.1. We firmly believe that the EYFS cannot function without the enduring support of parents.
- 12.2. Parents are invited to termly parents' evenings; however, the school has an open half-hour every Tuesday morning to aid liaison.
- 12.3. Parents are asked to sign permission slips for any visits out of school, use of photographs of their child and using the internet at school.
- 12.4. Parents are asked to complete admission forms, a medical form and to write a brief synopsis about their child to help the school to understand their character and personality.

13. Transition periods

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

