

Foundation Stage Policy

St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Lichfield Rd, Bloxwich, Walsall WS3 3LY

www.st-peters.walsall.sch.uk/



MISSION STATEMENT:

Learning Together

Loving God

Becoming the best I can

Last reviewed on: September 2025

Next review due by: September 2026

In this policy – The Foundation Stage refers to all children in Nursery and Reception classes.

RATIONALE

Foundation Stage education provides young children with a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes.

During the Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

This policy reflects the opinions and expectations of all the staff and reinforces the schools' Mission Statement. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those involved in Early Years education.

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE.

The Foundation Stage of the curriculum consists of prime and specific areas of learning.

The prime areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

As a Catholic school the children also receive Religious Education following the Diocesan RE Scheme.

Appropriate emphasis is placed on each area in order to fully develop each individual child, in a secure environment which helps them to become confident learners, and where they have opportunities to initiate activities which will promote learning and enable them to learn from each other.

ENTITLEMENT

All children in the Foundation Stage will be given a wide range of opportunities and experiences to develop in all areas of the curriculum. All activities will be planned and presented using the appropriate ages and stages of development within the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, in order to continue the child's learning journey.

The Foundation Stage has an inclusive curriculum to relate to all children irrespective of gender, special needs or those children who have English as a second language.

AIMS

In the Foundation Stage, children are introduced to all areas of learning, and the Catholic faith, and in the light of our Mission Statement we endeavour to:

- ensure that children experience a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum within the framework of a happy and caring environment.
- develop confidence and self-identity where the child is valued unconditionally.
- ensure that every child is given equal access to all areas of the curriculum regardless of, culture, disability or gender.
- recognise that planned and spontaneous play is central to the child's development, and should be valued as a child's work in order to develop skills in thinking and communication.
- provide effective liaison with parents where we identify the parents as first educators.
- foster positive interaction with peers and adults from all key stages.

OBJECTIVES

To enable the child to:

- develop spiritually and morally according to the teaching of the Catholic Church within a caring and stimulating environment.
- be given opportunities to develop as independent learners where positive encouragement leads to confidence in their own achievements.
- follow a structured, broad, balanced and challenging curriculum within a safe, secure and well equipped environment.
- be given a wide range of stimulating opportunities for planned and spontaneous play, by effectively monitoring the children's progress to ensure that individual needs are met by building upon present learning and interests.

NEW PARENTS MEETING

In the summer term, new parents meetings are held for all new Reception children and parents. During these meetings the Foundation Stage curriculum, school, expectations, uniform, attendance etc. are discussed.

This is an opportunity for the parents to ask any questions, meet the staff and look around the school.

NEW NURSERY CHILDREN

New Nursery children will be invited into Nursery for a 'Play and Stay' session.

CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION

The ages and stages of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance form the basis of development and achievement for all children through to the Early Learning

Goals, at the end of Reception. If children achieve the Early Learning Goals, learning continues through work planned from National Curriculum subjects.

IMPLEMENTATION

The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment underpins the learning and development across all areas of learning and supports the child to remain an effective and motivated learner within the Early Years. These are called Characteristics of Effective Learning. The unique child reaches out to relate to people and things through the Characteristics of Effective Learning which are:

- playing and exploring
- active learning
- creating and thinking critically

All the children will be given the opportunity to develop their skills through the recognised areas of learning

MORAL AND SPIRITUAL

Children will be taught the values and principles of moral behaviour following the Catholic Curriculum directory within a caring and stimulating environment. Children will be encouraged to show an awareness of the cultural diversity both locally and in the wider community. The school's policy of positive behaviour will be reinforced, and children made aware of the school and class code of conduct.

PERSONAL SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Successful personal and social and emotional development is critical for very young children in all aspects of their lives, and gives them the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning. It is crucial that settings provide the experiences and support to enable children to develop a positive sense of themselves.

All children will be given opportunities to work, play and co-operate in a variety of group situations in order to foster independent learning, develop personal values, self esteem and encourage a sensitive attitude to others. Children are encouraged to share ideas, resources, thoughts, and adult time, being aware of behaviour which is acceptable.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Physical development in the Foundation Stage is about improving skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement. It helps children to gain confidence in what they do, and enables them to feel the positive benefits of being healthy and active.

Children will be given the opportunity to use a variety of both small and large equipment and apparatus, and express themselves through their response to music and dance.

A large outdoor play area is available for children during some P.E. lessons, where appropriate, to develop gross motor skills.

Throughout the areas, a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum is planned to ensure that a challenging programme of activities is available to all children

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

Communication and language depend on learning and being competent in a number of key skills, together with having the confidence, opportunity, encouragement, support and disposition to use them. This area of learning includes communication, speaking and listening in different situations and for different purposes.

Children will be given opportunities to develop an understanding of language to increase their competence in speaking and listening.

LITERACY

Literacy development depends on the becoming confident and competent in learning and using key skills. These skills include reading and writing and will be developed through the Jolly Phonics scheme. Children will be given the opportunity, encouragement and support to develop these skills during focused work and free play situations.

The school uses Oxford Reading Tree reading scheme and reading books are sent home on a weekly basis.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematical development depends on becoming confident and competent in learning and using key skills. This area of learning includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shapes, space and measures. Mathematical understanding should be developed through stories, songs, games and imaginative play, so that children enjoy using and experimenting with numbers, including numbers greater than 20.

A range of challenging activities will be given to all children in order to provide a sound basis for numeracy. Emphasis will be placed on practical experiences, which can be used in problem solving situations involving number operations and correct use of mathematical language.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

In this area of learning, children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in science, design and technology, history, geography and ICT.

They will be given opportunities to develop an understanding of their own environment, other people and features of the natural and man-made world

EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN

Creativity is fundamental to successful learning. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another, and so extend their understanding

Children will be given opportunities, through a wide range of activities using a variety of materials, tools and musical instruments, to explore and develop their own creativity.

PLANNING

Planning is carried out in order to ensure that all children achieve their full potential.

Regular meetings involving Foundation Stage staff in order to maintain continuity and progress.

In Nursery and Reception, half termly plans are produced following the areas of learning outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum documentation.

Nursery and Reception use Cornerstones Topics to develop planning further. Planning in greater detail is carried out on a weekly and daily basis.

PLAY IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

Through the outdoor classroom children experience the areas of learning. These areas are planned for on the weekly planning sheet and help to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding of the children.

INCLUSION IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most will achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage.

Some children may progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities and children from all social and cultural backgrounds.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Practitioners need to provide relevant learning and development opportunities and set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the diverse needs of children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals, and embed their learning by the end of the Foundation Stage.

All children will be given the opportunity to take part in the wide range of activities available, regardless of class, ethnicity, gender or disability.

Technology

Nursery and Reception classes have computer provision and children are taught computer skills.

Computers are available in each classroom, where children will have access to a wide range of appropriate programmes.

Appropriate software is available for use with all computers and Interactive White Boards, iPads, radios, CD players, T.V. and other technological toys are available for use when required.

ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING

On entry to Nursery, children are individually assessed through the schools own starting school booklet and Wellcomm speech and language assessment, these assessments are used to inform planning, track children's progress and to identify any children with special educational needs.

Reception Baseline

All reception children will take part in entry baseline assessment. St. Peter's school is using NFER baseline assessment and Wellcomm speech and language assessment. These assessments are completed through practical activities and outcomes are used to inform planning to further the children's learning journey.

Further records for reading progress are kept by both Nursery and Reception.

Records showing progress in all areas of learning are kept for all children in line with the ages and stages of development, these are called 'Learning Profiles.'

Foundation Stage Profiles are regularly updated through teacher assessments, observations and recorded work. These assessments are made during individual child initiated time and in group situations.

Each term, parents are invited to make an appointment to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. An annual written report for each child is given to parents towards the end of the summer term, and gives a detailed assessment of the child's progress.

S.E.N.D

Planning for all children takes account of individual needs, and identifies those children who will require additional support, or have particular needs or disabilities. Staff work closely with parents to identify learning needs and should respond quickly to any areas of difficulty, develop strategies to meet those needs and make effective use of individual education plans where appropriate, in an attempt to avoid any future difficulties

Any child with special needs is identified as early as possible, either through initial notification by parents or through school-based assessment on entry to school. These children are referred to the S.E.N. Coordinator, who will make the necessary arrangements to support the child, either internally or by contacting the relevant outside agencies, following parental consultation.

RESOURCES

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. 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 we believe that this encourages independent learning.

HEALTH ISSUES AND PROCEDURES

Parents are asked to inform the school and class teacher of any health issues their child may have. This information is recorded and the child's well-being is monitored. We do administer prescribed medicines only. These have to be in their original packaging and parents have to complete school paperwork in order for staff to administer any medicines.

ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents are involved in the school's shared reading programme and a home/school reading record is kept, which ensures that parents are fully informed of the child's progress on a regular basis. Home/school links are encouraged through the use of activities linked to topic work in Nursery and Reception, which provides parents with information telling them what their child will be working on during that week. This also gives them an activity and suggestions how they can support their child.

There are opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher each half term, and a written report of the child's achievement is produced for parents annually

READINESS TO LEARN

At St. Peter's school we value each child and ensure that they are at a point at which they are mature enough and curious enough to want to know about the world around them. We judge this to be when a child achieves a Good Level of Development (GLD) in Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal and Social Development, Literacy and Maths at the end of their year in the Reception class and achieves this through demonstrating the Characteristics of Effective Learning. Any children who do not achieve this will be monitored closely through pupil progress meetings and appropriate interventions will be put in place in order to support their learning and development.

PARENT AND TODDLER GROUP

A Parent and Toddler session takes place at St. Peter's Catholic Church parish hall. A structured programme is organised in order that parents can share a wide variety of preschool activities with their child.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs that are taken within the Early Years will only be taken on designated cameras or iPads within the Foundation Stage, no personal cameras or mobile phones will be used.

Toileting and Intimate Care

All children at St. Peters School have the right to be safe and treated with dignity, respect and privacy at all times so as to enable them to access all aspects of the school.

See policy regarding intimate care.