



SAINT
OSWALD'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

February 2016
Adopted 4/5/16

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

St Oswald's Catholic Primary School
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
February 2016

"Fully committed to offering excellence in education"

Introduction

At St Oswald's Catholic Primary School we offer "excellence in education". We aim to give the children;

"A love of learning, a thirst for knowledge, an understanding and appreciation of their faith and religion, and the world they live in, and many happy memories".

We believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and support that they need to reach their full potential.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets standards for the learning, care and development of children from birth to five years old. It aims to help young children achieve the five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and eventually achieving economic wellbeing. The broad knowledge and skills gained in this key time in the lives of young children, provide the firm foundations needed for future progression.

There are four distinct but complementary principles that guide the effective work of all practitioners in the Foundation Stage. They are outlined below:

- **A Unique Child:**
Every child is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships:**
Children learn to be strong and independent through *positive relationships*.
- **Enabling Environments:**
Children learn and develop well in *enabling environments*, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs.
- **Learning and Development:**
Children *develop and learn* through three prime and four specific areas of learning and development.

We aim to provide the learning and development that each child requires to ensure they reach their full potential and are ready for future school learning.

There are seven interconnected areas of learning and development that are divided into three prime areas and four specific areas. The three prime areas are important as they build the children's enthusiasm and curiosity for learning, form positive relationships and prepares them for their future learning as they move through the Key Stages.

The Prime Areas:

- **Communication and Language:**
Opportunities to experience a rich language environment, develop confidence and skills in expressing themselves, and speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical Development:**
Opportunities to be active and interactive' develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Help to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy food choices.
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development:**
Help to develop a positive sense of themselves and others, form positive relationships and develop respect for others, to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings, to understand appropriate behaviour in groups, and to have confidence in their own abilities.

There are four specific areas which strengthen and apply the three prime areas, they include the knowledge and skills that the children need to make further progression.

The Specific Areas

- **Literacy:**
Encouragement to link sounds and letters, to begin to read and write, and give access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics:**
Opportunities to develop and improve skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and to describe shapes, space, and measures.
- **Understanding the World:**
Opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment to make sense of their physical world and their community.

- **Expressive Arts and Design:**

Explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. Opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

The Characteristics of Learning

In planning and guiding children's activities, the three characteristics of development are considered. These characteristics move through all areas of learning and enable practitioners to reflect upon the ways that individual children engage with other people and their environment, and be a motivated learner.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are:

- **Playing and exploring** - Engagement of children, investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- **Active learning** - Motivation of children, concentration and willingness to keep on trying, and enjoy achievements.
- **Creating and thinking critically** - Thinking to develop their own ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Provision

The Reception staff are dedicated, professional and caring, and provide a quality curriculum for the children. They plan around the children's interests, needs and stage of learning development to ensure that the children achieve their full potential and have a positive start to school life. The children are guided through set routines when they start to ensure that they feel confident in their learning environment. We value our links with parents/guardians and have an open door policy.

We have welcoming indoor and outdoor areas. The learning environment is stimulating, inviting, colourful, interactive and challenging. All areas are resourced so that children are encouraged to use them and engage in purposeful activities with or without an adult. Resources are organised so that children can make informed choices, select independently what they need and are responsible for tidying up.

Transition

Nursery/Pre-School to Primary School

We encourage parents/guardians to visit the school to look around and talk with a member of staff prior to the completion of the Admission Forms.

The Reception teacher visits each child in their nursery/pre-school setting to observe them in their familiar environment. The child meets their new teacher and the teacher spends time with the child's Key Worker, sharing their Learning Journey.

To ensure that the transition is successful and smooth, the children and their parents are invited to three induction afternoons in the Summer term. The children are given the opportunity to spend time in the Reception classroom and outdoor area, and to meet other adults from the school. The parents meet the Head Teacher and Reception teacher, and are able to sample the lunch menu and make contacts with after school provision e.g. WASPS. There is also an opportunity for parents to buy uniform items stocked by the school.

Parents are given the opportunity to meet with the Reception teacher late in the Summer term, to discuss their child's achievements, the things they enjoy and any issues that they feel the school needs to be aware of.

Reception to Year 1

The children take part in transition afternoons when they move up to Year 1 to get to know their new teacher and support staff. The Reception and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss the children's achievements and their next steps. Much of the first term in Year 1 is transition from EYFS to National Curriculum.

Observation, Planning and Assessment

The unique child is at the centre of our planning at St Oswald's. We achieve this through observation and ongoing formative assessment. Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to then plan activities and support. Formative assessment (ongoing assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process in Reception.

We achieve this by:

- Observing children in their play through daily activities and routines, child initiated activities, planned activities, and learning that takes place at home, shared by parents/guardians.

- Using ongoing assessment to understand the children's stage of development, individual needs and interests, and learning styles.
- Reflecting on observations to shape learning experiences for each child by planning relevant and motivating learning experiences in all areas of learning and development.

In the first six weeks of school, a Baseline Assessment is carried out through observations and using 'CEM' (Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring) A Baseline Assessment program developed by Durham University.

In the summer term of Reception, **The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)** is completed. These summative assessments provide us with a clear picture of the child's development, knowledge, understanding and abilities, and their readiness for Year 1. Each child is assessed against the seventeen Early Learning Goals and teachers determine whether children are working at the 'Emerging' stage, at 'Expected' stage or are 'Exceeding' them.

The EYFSP is shared with parents/guardians through an end of year report on their child and is discussed during an end of year Parents' Evening in July.

Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Special Needs

The Early Years Foundation Stage is taught in accordance with the present policy for Equal Opportunities. Children are encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards people of different ethnic groups, cultures, beliefs, gender and ability. We support the belief that everyone is unique in their own right and act upon it.

- Ramps and a disabled toilet are available within the school to cater for children with physical disabilities.
- We value the diversity of individuals and deliver a curriculum that respects a child's ethnic faith and cultural heritage, and the special needs of each child. All children are treated fairly and we give every child the opportunity to achieve.
- It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that we identify and help those children in our care with additional educational needs including gifted children.
- The school's SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) is the designated member of teaching staff who co-ordinates the special needs of children throughout the school.
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Health and Safety

- Children are encouraged to bring water to school every day, in water bottles. Fresh drinking water is also available.
- Any dietary needs are recorded during Initial Parent Meetings and shared with adults, including catering staff.
- All parents complete a Data Collection sheet which includes medical information.
- Fruit is available during afternoon playtime. Parents are encouraged to provide a healthy snack for morning playtime.
- First Aiders are available throughout the day. Injuries are recorded and parents are sent a copy to highlight the first aid given.
- Children are involved in practice fire evacuation procedures.

Safeguarding and welfare

See whole school policies: Child Protection and Safeguarding

February 2016

Review Date: February 2017