

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

October 2017



Saint Augustine Webster
Catholic Voluntary Academy



Mission Statement

The school will aim to:

- develop an awareness of God's love and presence in individual's lives and to elicit a response to that;
- help pupils to develop a reasoned set of attitudes, values and beliefs allowing the individual to make sound and moral judgements in the light of personal commitment to the Lord, Jesus Christ;
- make prayer, worship and liturgy valued experiences;
- develop real links with home and parish;
- create caring relationships with all those children and adults who are involved in the school.

Policy on the Early Years Foundation Stage

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage extends from birth to the end of the Reception year. Entry into our academy is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are four (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday). However, if there are vacancies, children may be admitted the term after their third birthday.
- 1.2 Children of Nursery age are entitled to 15 hours education per week. This can be accessed five mornings per week, five afternoons per week or two and a half days either end of the week. Some working parents may be eligible for further funding allowing up to 30 hours.
- 1.3 The Early Years Foundation Stage is a key stage in its own right and is important in preparing children for learning in KS1 and KS2. It is the Early Learning Goals that set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- 1.4 Children joining our school may have already learnt a great deal. Many have been learning in one of the various pre-school settings that exist in our community. The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:
 - it builds on what our children already know and can do;
 - it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
 - it offers a structure for open ended learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, challenges more able children and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
 - it provides a rich and stimulating environment.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage is to be found in the document 'Development Matters'. It underpins all future learning by promoting and developing 'Prime Areas' and 'Specific Areas' of learning.

Prime areas

- personal, social and emotional development;
- physical development;
- communication and language.

Specific areas

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding of the world;
- expressive arts and design.

3 Teaching and learning style

- 3.1 The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.
- 3.2 The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:
 - the partnership between teachers and parents/carers that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
 - the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;

- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents and carers;
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage.

4 Play at the Foundation Stage

- 4.1 Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears, or re-live anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations.
- 4.2 Opportunities for play are carefully planned with appropriate attention to the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning'. This provides an emphasis on the process of learning.

5 Inclusion at the Foundation Stage

- 5.1 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 we are planning for their learning.
- 5.2 At the Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.
- 5.3 We meet the needs of all our children through:
- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
 - using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs, especially with regard to speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) in line with the academy's Communication and Interaction Policy;
 - providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively;
 - offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued;
 - employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid 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 providing support (such as speech therapy, physiotherapy or occupational therapy), as necessary.

6 The Foundation Stage curriculum

- 6.1 Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the 'Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage' document. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across the stages of development, progressing towards the Early Learning Goals and beyond.
- 6.2 The Foundation Stage curriculum is a play based one but it is also recognised that towards the end of the Reception year some children will be ready for more recorded or formal learning. It is also recognised, however, that some children will need a continuation of the play based curriculum beyond the Foundation Stage. For this reason, the Autumn term in Year One is seen as a transition term where children are able to achieve Early Learning Goals when they are developmentally ready.
- 6.3 The 'Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage' provides the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Short term planning reflects both the needs and interests of the children. Continuous provision plans are displayed in provision areas. These may be changed as children's needs and interests change. In addition, children in Reception are taught synthetic phonics through the 'Read, Write, Inc' scheme.
- 6.4 The school makes full use of the outdoor learning space, where planned activities take place to support all areas of learning and development throughout the year. Children wear suitable clothing at all times.

7 Assessment

- 7.1 Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, assessment is ongoing and informal. Planned and incidental observations of the children are made in the Foundation Unit and recorded using the online recording tool 'Tapestry'. Parents are invited to view practitioner observations of learning and contribute by describing their child's experiences at home. This evidence is referenced to the stages of development within the 'Practice Guidance' and each child has a record of their development which is also shared with parents. Data is collected termly and analysed in pupil progress meetings.
- 7.2 The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is the statutory assessment process that summarises and describes children's attainment at the end of the Foundation Stage. Judgements are made in 17 aspects of learning and development contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage using teacher knowledge of children's development.
- 7.3 Assessments using the developmental age bands are made at the beginning and mid-point of the F2 (Reception) year. Data is uploaded to 'O-Track' and submitted to the LA. The data analysis used to monitor children's progress throughout the year and plan for future needs. The data is also analysed in pupil progress meetings within school. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We share the information contained within individual profiles at our parental consultation meetings.
- 7.4 At the end of the final term in F2 (Reception), we send the final EYFSP judgements to the LA for analysis via 'O-Track'. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the Year One transition term.
- 7.5 Each child has a learning journal in which can be found examples of recorded work and evidence such as planned and incidental observations.

7.6 Parents and carers receive an annual report that inform parents about their child's development against the ELGs and the characteristics of their learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress.

8 The role of parents and carers

8.1 We believe that all parents and carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents and carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents or carers about their child before their child starts in our school;
- visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting prior to their starting school;
- opportunities given to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents and carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress;
- encouraging parents to engage in 'Tapestry'
- encouraging parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- having flexible admission arrangements, and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- arranging for children to start school over the first two weeks of term, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school;
- offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers;
- providing various activities that involve parents and carers, i.e. regular communication with home through newsletters, reading diaries, and inviting parents and carers to curriculum evenings, in order to discuss the kind of learning that the children are undertaking.

8.2 There is a formal meeting for parents and carers in the Autumn and Spring terms, at which the parents/carers discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents and carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

9 Resources

9.1 We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive and independent attitude to learning. We use high quality materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to be responsible for resources when engaged in activities which are child initiated, in order to fully embed the skills, concepts and attitudes being taught

10 Monitoring and review

10.1 This policy is monitored by the governing body, and will be reviewed three years from now.

Miss E Morrisroe

EYFS Co-ordinator

October 2017