

St. Michael's Catholic Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

*With Jesus we can **achieve** what we **dream**
and **believe***

School Mission Statement (Spring 2015)

Our Vision

We aim to inspire and nurture every child to become independent, confident lifelong learners within a safe and happy environment.

Overview

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St. Michael's the children join us once they have turned three in our Nursery, and at the beginning of the school year in which they are five in Reception.

We have two-part time Nursery classes (morning and afternoon) and two Reception classes in our Early Years Foundation Stage. We also offer 30 hours Nursery places for up to 8 children. Our team includes 3 teachers and 4 learning support assistants.

The EYFS is based on four overarching principles:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

A Unique Child

At St. Michael's Catholic Primary School, we recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. We aim to develop a positive attitude to learning by providing challenging and stimulating activities and experiences.

All children at St. Michael's are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. Every child matters and all of the children and families are valued within our school. We give our

children every opportunity to succeed and achieve their best. We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all of our children.

Children's progress is monitored regularly and action is taken to support this progress as necessary.

It is important to us that all of the children at St. Michael's are safe. We provide a stimulating environment where children are allowed to take risks but are taught to recognise and avoid hazards.

We take the necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and the full Safeguarding Policy is available in school for parents to read.

Positive Relationships

At St. Michael's we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

We recognise that parents are children's first and foremost educators and we highly value the contribution they make.

We do this through:

- Informal meetings with parents before their child starts school.
- Giving children and their families opportunities to visit their new classroom and meet the teachers prior to starting school.
- Offering parents, the opportunities to discuss their child's progress.
- Arranging activities throughout the year to involve parents (weekly story time, cookery sessions, gardening sessions, parent workshops, stay and play sessions).

In our Nursery children are assigned a key person – either the Nursery teacher or one of the Learning Support Assistants. In our Reception classes the teacher acts as key person, supported by the Learning Support Assistants.

All of the EYFS team members are valued and a culture of mutual support is fostered through discussions and respect for individual contributions.

Enabling Environments

At St. Michael's we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. The staff observe the children and assess their interests, development and learning, before planning the next steps for the children – offering challenging but achievable activities and experiences.

We provide a stimulating and safe environment both indoors and outdoors. Children are encouraged to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Learning and Development

At St. Michael's we recognise that all children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates.

Our curriculum is **coherently** planned to help children to work towards the Early Learning Goals and to prepare their readiness for Year One.

Children explore and develop their learning experiences through play. We aim to provide structured play experiences through which children can:

- Play and explore (finding out about the world, playing with what they know, be willing to have a go).
- Be active learners (be motivated, persistent and enjoy their achievements).
- Be creative and critical thinkers (have their own ideas, make predictions and plan and review their ideas).

These characteristics of effective learning underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

We recognise the important role all the adults within our setting play. We provide all staff with ongoing professional development to support them with this role. Our aim is that all staff ensure that every opportunity is a learning opportunity; making every interaction with children count.

In planning and guiding what children learn, staff develop and adjust their practice guided by the characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- **playing and exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creative and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Staff are also trained to make the best use of research into cognitive science, in relation to how children learn and to connect this research to its practical implications for teaching and learning.

Areas of Learning and Development

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

The Prime areas:

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

These areas are closely linked and are central to all other areas of learning and development.

The Specific areas:

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

In each area of learning and development there are Early Learning Goals that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. Planning includes opportunities for child led, adult directed and adult led activities.

The Read Write Inc. scheme and the Talk for Writing scheme are introduced in Nursery and Reception to support reading and writing and build the foundations for Key Stage One. The home reading scheme is RWI book bag books.

The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are implicitly embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Assessment

During the children's first term in the Foundation Stage, the staff assess the children through formal and informal assessments and a baseline assessment is carried out during a child's **first six weeks** in school. Photographs, observations and links to the Early Years framework are collected for each child over the year using the Evidence for Learning and the 2Simple electronic assessment tools. These observations help to build up a picture of each child's learning and form an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child. The Foundation Stage Profile is used to assess children's progress during their year in Reception.

We are well aware that all children need the support of parents and teachers to make good progress in school. We strive to build positive links with the parents of each child by keeping them informed about the way in which the children are being taught and how well each child is progressing.

Roles within the Early Years Foundation Stage

The role of the Early Years Lead is to:

- Provide a strategic lead and direction for the EYFS.
- Monitor and evaluate the EYFS and report to the head teacher and the governing body.
- Monitor and review pupil progress across the EYFS.
- Support colleagues with planning and teaching, ensuring an efficient and cohesive team.
- Keep up to date with recent developments and informing other team members of these developments.
- Purchasing and organisation of resources and the learning spaces.
- Lead regular EYFS team meetings.
- Act as a point of contact for parents and carers- providing close home school links.

The role of the class teachers with support from L.S.A's is to:

- Monitor and review progress of the pupils in their class.
- Be responsible for their methods of teaching and learning.
- Plan and evaluate the EYFS curriculum.
- Be responsible for their teaching space, including displays and resources.
- Facilitate communication with parents.

Monitoring and Review

The Early Years Lead prepares a detailed report, reviewing the EYFS, for the governing body and head teacher who are responsible for the overall monitoring of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Governors review the EYFS in accordance with the policy review timetable and meet with the Early Years Lead to discuss the findings of the review.

30 Hours Funded Childcare

We offer up to 8 places in Nursery for the additional 15 hours' free early education a week. Eligibility criteria for the new entitlement has been set out by HMRC and includes the following:

- Both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family), each expect to earn at least £115 a week or work more than 16 hours at the National Living Wage (unless you became self-employed less than 12 months ago), or each expect to earn at least £111 a week or work more than 16 hours at the National Living Wage (unless you became self-employed less than 12 months ago), or expect to earn at least £61.92 a week if you are under 18, £84.80 a week if you are aged 18-20 or £52.80 a week if you are an apprentice (either under 19 or in the first year of your apprenticeship), or
- Both parents are employed or one or both parents is temporarily away from the workplace on paternal, maternity or paternity leave, adoptive leave or receiving statutory sick pay, or
- One parent is employed and the other parent has substantial caring responsibilities based on specific benefits received for caring, or one parent is employed and one parent is disabled or incapacitated based on receipt of specific benefits.
- You and your partner must both live in England and neither parent must have an income of more than £100,000 per year.

Applying for 30 hours' free childcare

You can apply for 30 hours free childcare in a single online childcare service application at www.childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk

We will offer:

Children will only be able to access the 30 hours based on a school term time schedule. Children who access a place will be able to have either a packed lunch or pay for a hot school dinner. They will be supervised to eat dinner in the hall and will receive a bespoke curriculum in the afternoon ensuring that their individual needs are met.