



Saint Christina's School
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

This Policy applies to the whole school including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), is publicly available on the School website and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

Monitoring and Review:

This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher. The Board of Governors undertakes a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than December 2017 or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require. All staff will be informed of the updated/reviewed policy and it is made available to them in either a hard copy or electronic format.

Signed: *J. Finlayson*

Date: February 2018

Jenny Finlayson
Headteacher

This policy was last reviewed agreed by the Headteacher of the school in January 2018 and will next be reviewed no later than January 2019 or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

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Related policies:

- Safeguarding and Child protection
- Health and Safety policy
- First Aid policy
- Physical Restraint policy
- Intimate Care policy
- Risk Assessment policy
- Missing Child policy
- Drop off and collection policy
- E-safety policy
- Educational visits policy
- Behaviour policy
- SEND policy
- Assessment and Record Keeping
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Food and Drink policy
- Substance Misuse policy
- Complaints and procedures policy
- Safeguarding including safer recruitment policy

Introduction

Early childhood education is valued in itself and should not be seen merely as a preparation for the next stage of learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In Saint Christina's School children start the Nursery class the September after they are three years old and progress into one of two Reception classes the following September.

This policy has been informed by current DfE documentation and ISI Checklist for the Early Years Foundation Stage, April 2017, ISI Handbook January 2017

Aims

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A Unique Child** – who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** – through which children can learn to be strong and independent.
- **Enabling Environments** – in which children can learn and develop; their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- **Learning and Development** – children learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in EYFS provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

N.B (For the purposes of this document the term Parent(s) refers to the principal carer(s) of the child.)

Equality Statement

At Saint Christina's School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, special educational needs and disability, religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected with the School feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in School life.

Effective Early Years Education

Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements. At Saint Christina's School we believe that children develop rapidly during the early years – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Therefore, practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued. Early Years experience should build on what the children already know and can do. No child should be disadvantaged. Parents and practitioners should work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

To be effective, the EYFS curriculum should be carefully structured (recognising different starting points; relevant to levels of need). There should be opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that they plan or initiate for themselves. Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children informed by knowledge of how children develop and learn. Well planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process. For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and well organised. Above all, effective learning and development for young children requires high quality care and education by practitioners.

The Early Years Framework

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage became affective from April 2017. At Saint Christina's School we adhere to this framework and the learning and development requirements. We promote the overarching principles and these guide our practice. These are –

- 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 individual needs

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and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and/or carers.

- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in EYFS provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

All children in the EYFS have access to a broad, rich topic based curriculum both indoors and outdoors

Spiritual and Moral Development

All Foundation Stage Staff adhere to the Saint Christina's Religious Education Policy. At Saint Christina's School we follow 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' scheme for Religious Education. Within the Catholic ethos of the school, children are encouraged to develop an awareness and respect for themselves and others, valuing individuals and their groups with justice and fairness, developing a sense of awe and wonder, different cultural experiences and awareness, religious experiences, faiths and festivals. All Foundation Stage children and staff join Key Stage 1 for Assembly. Nursery class attend a short weekly Liturgy service and Reception attend Mass in the school Chapel with the whole school every Friday (Nursery attend for special feast days) Every day starts and ends with a prayer and we say Grace before and after meals.

The seven areas of learning and development, in addition to Spiritual and Moral education, are:

- Prime area: Personal, Social & Emotional Development

Self-confidence and self-awareness: children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help.

Managing feelings and behaviour: children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.

Making relationships: children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children.

- Prime area: Communication and Language

Listening and attention: children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.

Understanding: children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.

Speaking: children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

- Prime area: Physical Development

Moving and handling: children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.

Health and self-care: children know the importance for good health of physical exercise, and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

- Specific area: Mathematics

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Numbers: children count reliably with numbers from 1 to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number. Using quantities and objects, they add and subtract two single-digit numbers and count on or back to find the answer. They solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing.

Shape, space and measures: children use everyday language to talk about size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money to compare quantities and objects and to solve problems. They recognise, create and describe patterns. They explore 12 characteristics of everyday objects and shapes and use mathematical language to describe them.

- Specific area: Literacy

Reading: children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.

Writing: children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

- Specific area: Understanding the World

People and communities: children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

The world: children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes.

Technology: children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technology for particular purposes.

- Specific area: Expressive arts and design

Exploring and using media and materials: children sing songs, make music and dance, and experiment with ways of changing them. They safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.

Being imaginative: children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes. They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role-play and stories.

- Montessori Method and Learning

Saint Christina's School was originally founded on Montessori principles and the Nursery class continues this tradition by incorporating Montessori Practices into each day.

Specialist teachers and extra-curricular opportunities

As well as specialist teachers and whole class lessons for P.E, music and movement, Spanish and Computing during the school day, children in the Foundation Stage also have access to a variety of after school clubs such as ballet, Irish dancing and sports to further their interests and development.

Characteristics of effective learning

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming
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an effective learner. They are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning will provide Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.

- Playing and exploring – engagement
- Active learning – motivation
- Creating and thinking critically – thinking

Play

Play underpins the delivery of the EYFS and as Foundation Stage practitioners we understand play is central to young children's development and educational growth. During play children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which children learn with enjoyment and we aim to provide play activities which allow our children to play spontaneously as well as with support from adults.

With our canopied areas we are able to offer the children all weather, all year round opportunities to learn through play outside. Local areas such as Primrose Hill also offer us the chance to extend our learning environment and the children's experiences.

The Learning environment

We understand the importance of an environment that is inspiring and stimulating and encourages the children to be independent. Therefore, we strive to provide an environment which is safe and secure, where the children can play, explore, experiment, develop confidence, be curious and learn. We foster autonomy and therefore, resources are clearly labelled for the children's ease of accessibility.

The opportunities for learning are not limited to the classroom and the opportunities available outdoors enhance the curriculum offered. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and energetic. The activities and resources available for the children outdoors, help them to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Planning, Assessment & Record Keeping

At Saint Christina's School, teaching staff prepare half termly maps and these plans are used by the teacher as a guide for weekly planning. However the teacher may alter these half termly plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all the areas of activity during the week, although they may not experience them each day.

We ensure our day offers a balance of child-initiated and adult-led based activities. We use small group or whole class times as an opportunity to encourage a particular aspect of learning or to discuss a particular topic. In Nursery and Reception, we encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. In Reception, the children are introduced to a more structured day and the activities are directed and differentiated as well as being more teacher led.

Formal assessments as well as continual observations inform and guide everyday planning. Throughout the year we carry out both formative and summative assessments.

EYFS Profile - The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. We record each child's level of development against the 17 early Learning goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure *Saint Christina's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all pupils fulfil their potential.*

that future planning reflects identified needs.

Parents receive an annual report at the end of the summer term that offers comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress and the next steps for the child.

Meeting the diverse needs of our children

We are committed to providing a learning environment for all, where the most able, those who have English as an additional language, the less able and children with learning difficulties or disabilities work alongside each other and are catered for with differentiated approaches.

- Parental involvement in a child's education is paramount to their success and happiness in school. We therefore work closely with parents to ensure we are meeting a child's needs together.
- All children's progress is tracked and observed and those that need extra support are identified and supported by the teacher in the classroom or the SENDCO that can either work alongside the child during class or in individual sessions.
- There are twice yearly Pupil Review sessions during which children are discussed in-depth by the class Teacher, the Head Teacher and the SENDCO.
- All children and families have access to a Speech and Language Therapist and weekly sessions are available either in a small group or 1 to 1 with the therapist. Children with identified needs also have access to a visiting Occupational Therapist if required.
- We are able to offer support and guidance to families that display a need for specialist involvement.

Positive relationships

In the Foundation Stage we recognise that children learn best when they are happy, safe, their individual needs are met and they are able to develop secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. All staff understand the importance of developing excellent relationships with the children.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We always make time for parents at Saint Christina's School and they are free to discuss their child's development and relating issues, or concerns as necessary. Staff are approachable and love to share with parents children's achievements and successes.

- Parents of Nursery children starting school are invited to attend a 'Starting Nursery' meeting.
- Parents of Reception children attend an introductory meeting before the term starts in September.
- Parent Teacher meetings take place in the in the autumn term. Nursery Teachers meet with four parents each a week to share work, celebrate achievements, discuss progress and talk about ways parents can support their child at home.
- All children receive a written report at the end of the School Year.
- Parents receive half termly class newsletters and termly curriculum outlines.
- We welcome parents into the classroom to share their knowledge, read stories and to celebrate festivals from around the world with us.
- Opportunities arise throughout the year for parents to accompany us on outings.
- All parents are invited to join the school's thriving Parents' Link association. Each class has a nominated Parents' Link representative who liaises between the parents and the school and organises social and fundraising events.
- Throughout the year there are a range of activities to which families are invited to share with the Foundation Stage and the whole school; Class assemblies, Sports Day, Christmas celebrations and discos and parties which are organised by Parents'Link.

Transitions

Foundation Stage practitioners understand that transition periods can be an unsettling and apprehensive time for

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children and their families, therefore we try to see transitions as a process rather than an event.

Nursery

Parents are invited to a 'Starting Nursery Meeting' and provided with an Introduction Booklet and additional useful information regarding supporting their child at home in preparation for school. Children and their parents are invited to visit the Nursery to experience our setting, play with others, and for parents to meet. In addition, for up to three weeks we provide a settling in period in which the school day is gradually extended. This allows the children to gradually learn their new routines, and get to know their new teachers and friends.

Transition from Nursery to Reception

The Nursery Staff put great consideration into the transfer of the children into the Reception Classes. Once their classes have been allocated, the outgoing Nursery class attend an orientation afternoon, to meet their new Reception teacher at the end of the summer term and begin to explore their new classroom. Parents are invited to attend an introductory meeting before the term begins. Similar to Nursery, the children's school day is gradually extended over a three week period but parents have the option for their children to stay full-time from the start of the term.

Transition into Key Stage 1

In the summer term, Nursery and Reception and Year 1 staff meet to transfer information/records and discuss the new children entering their class. Information shared includes;

- Foundation Stage Profile results
- Significant Events Folder
- Work Samples
- Assessments

We endeavor to prepare children for the formalities of key Stage 1 by increasing the structure and types of activities by the end of the Summer Term in Reception.

Admissions

Children are not assessed or ability tested for Saint Christina's Nursery or Reception places. Admission is purely via the general criteria set out by the Governing body. We are proud of our non-selective policy and the fact that we accept a range of learning abilities at Saint Christina's.

The Reception Classes each can hold 20 children, and admission, like Nursery, is subject to availability. Nursery children are given automatic entry into Reception.

Staffing ratios

The Nursery Class has two teachers and three teaching assistants. Each Reception Class has a designated teacher and one fulltime teaching assistant in each class (including a Pediatric First Aider].

We uphold the required adult to child ratio at all times in all EYFS classes both inside and whilst outside; 1:13 with a teacher present and 1:8 with other suitably qualified staff. Therefore, there is always adequate supervision to ensure that the needs of the individual children being cared for are met and that their learning and play is supported and developed.

Safeguarding and Welfare

In the Foundation Stage we understand that we are legally required to comply with Safeguarding and welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017. We adhere to all guidance and procedures outlined in our school Safeguarding and Child Protection school policy which are in line with procedures from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016 (KCSIE), Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 (WTSC), London Child Protection Procedures (2017) and the Children Act 1989 and 2004. Corporal punishment is not used at Saint Christina's School.

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We understand that we are required to:

- Keep children healthy, safe and secure.
- Our school policy includes the use of mobile phones, mobile devices and cameras in our setting and also an explanation of the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.
- Manage behavior effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs including children with special educational needs. (See Behaviour policy)
- Have a whole school policy on the use of physical restraint.
- Any use of force by staff will be reasonable, proportionate and lawful. Reasonable force will be used in accordance with the DfE guidance Use of Reasonable Force and only when immediately necessary and for the minimum time necessary to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:
 - committing a criminal offence
 - injuring themselves or others
 - causing damage to property, including their own
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to good order and discipline at the School or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom or elsewhere.
 - Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so and each child has been assigned a key person.
 - Adhere to the first aid/medical and medicine requirements through our whole school procedures and policies (see First Aid and administering medicine policies)
 - Provide children with access to drinking water throughout the day.
 - Smoking is not allowed in or on the premises when children are present or about to be present.
 - Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose and carry out all necessary risk assessments.
 - Our School Educational and Off- site visits policy refers to transporting children in the EYFS.
 - - Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
 - Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavor to meet all these requirements.