



God shines within our hearts.
Jesus walks by our side.
The Holy Spirit gives us strength.

EYFS Policy 2026

'All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.' (*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation stage 2024*)

Inclusion

We value all of our children as individuals at St Mary's Catholic Primary School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve the best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. 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, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from 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 taking action to provide support as necessary.



Active learning through play

At St. Mary's CVA we recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language.

Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

In the Early Years Setting at St. Mary's CVA practitioners provide both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding.

Welfare

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

Health and safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. Children are allowed to take risks but are taught to recognise and avoid hazards.

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2024. Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet the needs by;

- Promoting the welfare and safeguarding of children
- Promote good health by providing nutritious snacks and preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- The children that are under five receive a small bottle of milk on a daily basis
- All infant children receive a healthy snack which can be any of the following – fruit, carrots, tomatoes, peas etc.
- Ensure that all adults who look after children or have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient managements of the setting and to meet the needs of the children
- Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission has been obtained from the child's parent/carer. Medical logs are kept safely within the classroom.



- Asthma notes which indicate when an inhaler has been administered to a child will be placed in the child's bag to inform parents when this was given. This will indicate when a future dose would be able to be given.
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries kept

Parents as partners

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

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children, we do this by;

- All parents/carers are invited to an induction meeting;
- A bespoke transition is in place for every child;
- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts our school in September;
- The class teacher is always available to speak with parents; appointments are not always necessary;
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during well prepared transition visits
- Offering regular opportunities to be included in the assessment process and parents in partnership
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There are two formal meetings for parents at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parent: class assemblies, whole school worship, open mornings etc.

All staff involved with EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within the Early Years setting.

A unique child

We recognise that every child is a competent learning, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates.

Positive relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Enabling environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. We respond to individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers. We value learning and people.

Learning and development



The classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. These are areas where the children can be active and be quiet. The classroom is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Planning

Organisation

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observations of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to make progress within their learning. We encourage children to play an active role in shaping their learning experiences. We aim to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year. All the seven areas of learning and developing are important and inter-connected.

The areas of learning and development

There are seven areas of learning and development that set out what providers must teach the children in their settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three prime areas are particularly important for learning and forming relationships. They build a foundation for children to thrive and provide the basis for learning in all areas.

These are the prime areas:

- Communication and language • Physical development • Personal, social and emotional development

Providers must also support children in four specific areas, which help strengthen and develop the three prime areas, and ignite children's curiosity and enthusiasm.

The specific areas are: • Literacy • Mathematics • Understanding the world • Expressive arts and design.

Assessment

Assessment at St Mary's, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. (The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook is referenced to support all evidence- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-handbook>)

Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This, combined with our own school baseline, creates a 'whole picture' of every child and allows us to judge whether a child is 'school ready.'

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally and in

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partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.