

# Margaret Roper Catholic Primary School

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Caring, Learning and Achieving together as part of God's Family

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

**Responsible: Curriculum Subcommittee**

**Created: 2011**

**Last Revised: 2017**

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**Due for revision in 2017 to 2018 academic year**



*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”* Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Margaret Roper Catholic Primary School all children join us, part time, at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. They begin attending school full time after a short part-time settling-in period.

The EYFS team consists of the Reception Teacher, the FS/KS1 Leader, currently the Deputy Headteacher and an experienced Teaching Assistant.

### ***Areas of Learning***

There are three prime and four specific areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings.

All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

#### **Prime areas:**

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

Staff will also support children in *four specific areas*, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

#### **Specific areas:**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design
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All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:



- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

### **A Unique Child**

At Margaret Roper Catholic Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Margaret Roper Catholic Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### **Enabling Environments**

At Margaret Roper Catholic Primary School 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.

### **Learning and Development**

At Margaret Roper Catholic Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

#### ***Play***

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development." Ofsted 2016

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as 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.

#### ***Active Learning***

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.



### ***Creativity and Critical Thinking***

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning and problem solving skills.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS team to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and KS1 will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.



# How we ensure the aims and objectives of the EYFS Policy are achieved.

## A Unique Child

### *Inclusion*

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Margaret Roper Catholic Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school 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 planning for their learning.

In the EYFS 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.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand the meanings of these. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (See school Child Protection policy.)

### *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." Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014



At Margaret Roper Catholic Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill – be healthy.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs – stay safe.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so – stay safe.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose – stay safe.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs – enjoy and achieve.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

## **Positive Relationships**

### *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 through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher/teaching assistant before starting school during a transfer afternoon;
- inviting new Reception parents to a Welcome Mass at the beginning of the autumn term
- providing regular information about the children’s learning to inform and enable parents to discuss and reinforce their child’s learning at home. Suggestions are given to enable the parents to support their child’s learning at home.
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child’s progress in our Reception Class ‘open-door’ policy and allowing free access to the children’s ‘Learning Journey’ books.
- parents are encouraged to come and spend time looking at their child’s book and seeing progress and achievements.
- encouraging parents to talk to the child’s teacher if there are any concerns. Appointments for a 1:1 meeting can be made at any time. There is an ‘Introduction to Reception’ meeting in September, a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring Terms, at which the teacher, TA and the parent discuss the child’s progress, and an Open Afternoon in the summer term. 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 parents: Class Liturgies, Sports Day, school outings, class visits e.g. parent who is a doctor;
- inviting parents to share comments relating to the children’s achievements.



All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the Reception teacher acts a 'Key Person' to every child in the class.

We have good links with two feeder nursery schools. Visits are undertaken by the EYFS teacher in the Summer Term. They meet the children and have the opportunity to discuss these with the staff. They also have an after school meeting with a teacher from the local state Nursery to discuss new intake children.

## **Enabling Environments**

### *Observation, Assessment and Planning*

At Margaret Roper School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff. The Planning within the EYFS is based on current topics centered round the children's interests each week for weekly planning, including all areas of learning, however, the teacher may alter these planners in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities.

We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

When the children begin school, we use their nursery records and complete an initial baseline assessment to assess the children's needs and where to initiate their learning journey from.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation of teacher focussed activities, child led challenges, teacher observation, specific planned challenges and photographs and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded through labels, quotes, photos and samples of work, both independent and focused, in children's individual learning journals. They also contain information provided by parents and other settings.

Targets are set for each child and each child's level of development is recorded against the Early Learning Goals.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the Early Learning Goals. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the class teacher.

### *The Learning Environment*

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Reception class has its



own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for learning in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to be resilient, explore new things, problem solve, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

## **Learning and Development**

### *Teaching and Learning Style*

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- 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 indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

### *Transition*

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition in to Year 1 and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.



Starting Reception – Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the summer term to meet their child’s new teachers and learn more about the Reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to

- To go through the school handbook
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Purchase uniform and book bag if requested
- Explain the arrangements for the gradual induction in to Reception Class sessions - The children are given two opportunities to come in to school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. They will spend an afternoon in their new class. Parents can leave their child during this session. This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them.

September Intake - When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply in order that they can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:

- During the first week, children will attend for the morning or afternoon session only.
- During the second week, and thereafter, children will attend for the full school day unless Foundation Staff and parents or guardians agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child.

Transition Key Stage 1 (Year 1) - Throughout the Reception year, each child’s involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school assemblies as well as sharing playtimes with the Key Stage 1 children.

September 2008, Revised 2011, 2017

Reviewed by Curriculum Subcommittee May 2011

Revised in light of changes to Statutory Framework – Autumn Term 2012.

Reviewed by Curriculum Subcommittee – October 2012.

Reviewed by Curriculum Subcommittee – November 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017

Planned for revision 2017-2018 academic year.

**Read this policy in conjunction with:**

Policy on Teaching & Learning

Outdoor Policy

Special Needs Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Equalities Policy



