

# *St Cuthbert's RC Primary School*

## *Walbottle*



### *Foundation Stage Policy*

At St Cuthbert's we live and learn in faith and love,  
through Jesus's teachings.

Our school is a place where we can grow as a family,  
helping each other to lead full and happy lives.

Consultation that has taken place		
Date Formally Approved By Governors	March 2018	
Date policy Became Effective		
Review Date	March 2020	
Person Responsible for Implementation and Monitoring	HT	Govs

## **1 Introduction**

**1.1** The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from three years of age to the end of the reception year. In our school, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. This is expanded in our school Admissions Policy. Key Stage 1 begins at the beginning of Year 1. The EYFS is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

**1.2** Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exist in the local area. 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 learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment.

## **2 Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

**2.1** This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

## **3 Teaching and learning style**

**3.1** 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 2.

**3.2** The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teacher and parents and carers, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that the teacher has 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 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 indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- the regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the EYFS.

3.3 The curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

3.4 A balance of child initiated and adult led opportunities will be planned in order to achieve a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum using stimulating resources and various teaching styles. This balance will change during the reception year in preparation for Year 1.

3.5 Planning needs to be flexible showing how all the areas in the curriculum can be developed and allow the practitioner to respond to children's interests. The outdoor learning environment will be an integral part of the daily curriculum. The ethos "Playing to Learn" is embedded as an underlying principle in our setting.

#### **4 Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

4.1 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.

#### **5 Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

5.1 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. We plan using our observations, basing topics around the children's interests.

5.2 In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet 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 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 recognise that some children will require additional support and resources to assist or extend their learning.

5.3 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.

## **6 The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum**

**6.1** The curriculum for the EYFS in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

**6.2** The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the EYFS. The schemes of work are topic based to support the interests of individual children. The medium term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and for those working towards Levels 1 of the National Curriculum.

**6.3** A revised EYFS Curriculum was published in June 2012 this policy has been amended to reflect this.

**6.4** The National EYFS Curriculum, which precedes the National Curriculum for Key Stages 1-4 (5 to 16 years), consists of seven areas of learning - three "Prime" and four "Specific":

### **Prime Areas**

Personal, Social, Emotional Development

Physical Development

Communication and Language

### **Specific Areas**

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

**6.5** Although the three prime areas of learning are fundamental to the development of each child in the reception year at St Cuthbert's all of the seven areas are inter-related and none can be delivered in isolation from the others.

**6.6** All areas of learning must be delivered through a highly structured and well planned approach to teaching.

**6.7** Opportunities to teach each child to experience and enjoy purposeful play are achieved through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities

**6.8** For each area of learning there are statutory "Early Learning Goals". These establish age related expectations for children to reach by the end of the EYFS and therefore provide the basis for planning teaching and learning activities in Reception.

## **7 Assessment**

**7.1** The EYFS Profile is the national, statutory assessment tool against which teachers record their observations of all children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals. This takes place throughout the year and enables a final assessment to be made at the end of the summer term of Reception.

**7.2** These regular assessments of children's learning are used to ensure that future planning

reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data at the end of the EYFS, through the Profile, is a statutory requirement.

7.3 During the first half-term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child, using the EYFS Profile and Development Matters. These assessments allow the school 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 assessment information at our parental consultation meetings.

7.4 At the end of the Summer Term, we send a summary of these assessments to the Local Authority (LA). The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. 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 (2)
- Exceeding expected levels (3) or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels emerging (1)

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

7.5 Each teacher keeps progress books - called learning journals, - and uses these to record and celebrate each child's learning. These learning journals contain a wide range of evidence to which we encourage parents and carers to contribute, and which is shared and discussed at each parental consultation meeting.

7.6 Parents and carers receive an annual report that provides detailed information regarding their child's progress over the year. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's wider achievements and learning preferences. The reports are written and sent to parents and carers in June, prior to the end of year review meeting in early July.

## **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 recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- 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 before starting school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- There is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. 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; offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's curriculum information, home school diaries and reading records. We invite parents to come in to school to share their child's work and achievements regularly and to join in with themed afternoons.
- Parents are asked to contribute to learning journals by filling in a WOW sheet letting the staff know of any WOW moments at home.
- Home visits are planned at the start of the year.

## **9 Resources**

**9.1** We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. 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.

This policy was agreed by the Full Governing Body on .....14.03.18

Signed .....