

# THE MARIST SCHOOL



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

School DfE No: 868/6013

**Ratified Date: 14th Feb 2019**

**Review Date: Spring term 2021**

**Signed:**

**Ann Nash**  
Chair of Governors

**Karl McCloskey**  
Principal

**Debby Kennett**  
Associate Principal of Early Years

*The charity of the order of the Marist Sisters Province of England (charity no. 225485) aims to promote and provide for the advancement of education by conducting and governing a day school for girls in England. The teaching shall be in full accordance with the Roman Catholic Church.*

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## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY



**Legal Status:**

- ISI Regulatory Handbook September 2016

**Applies to:**

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

**To be read with:**

- Other EYFS policies

**Available from:**

- The respective School Office and website

**Monitoring and Review:**

- To be continuously monitored and reviewed by no later than two years from the date shown below.

# FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

**“I hear and I forget,  
I see and I remember,  
I do and I understand”**

## **Introduction**

At the Marist School the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from 3 years of age to the end of the Reception year. In our school, most children join us at the beginning of each of the three school terms, however in the EYFS they can join us at any point in the academic year. Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The Foundation Stage 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. This policy was developed by Debby Kennett (Foundation Stage Coordinator) in line with the revised Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance 2014. The policy will be reviewed in the Autumn Term 2019.

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exist in our community. 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.

## **Aims of the Foundation Stage**

Our aim is to have happy, motivated, stimulated and focused children who gain a sense of self-esteem, self-confidence, achievement and pleasure from the challenges, relationships and support they meet through their time in the Foundation Stage.

## **Links with other Setting Policies**

The Foundation Stage Policy should be read in conjunction with all other policy documents in the school. Policies can be found both in the staff and parent handbooks. These include the following:

- Admission policy
- Accidents and illness of Children/First Aid
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour
- Child Protection
- Complaints Procedure
- EAL policy
- Equal Opportunities
- Educational Visits
- Foundation Stage Curriculum Policies
- Health and Safety
- Learning and Teaching
- Recording, Reporting and Assessment
- Special Educational Needs/Able and Talented

## **Organisation**

Early Years currently consists of two classrooms that are situated in the main school building. The classrooms are large with natural and artificial lighting. The classrooms have interconnecting doors that allow for sharing resources and staff. The classes are named Nursery (Ladybirds), Reception (Butterflies 1) All classes have access to an outdoor play area that is partially covered to allow for use all year round and a sensory garden.

Nursery admits children from the age of 3 and rising 3. The children will remain in this class until the academic year they turn 5 where they then move into the Reception until the end of the Foundation Stage.

The school day for Nursery starts at 8.45am and for Reception 8.40am, both classes finishes at 3.15pm. There is an early and late car provision where children can be dropped off from 8am and collected up to 4.15pm. The school also offers an After School Infant Care club. There are two sessions, 3.45pm-4.45pm and 4.45pm-5.45pm. Parents are charged for this service.

Nursery children have the option of morning, afternoon or all-day sessions on their chosen days. Morning sessions are from 8.45am-11.45pm. Afternoon sessions are from 12.15pm – 3.15pm. Nursery children are required to do a minimum of 3 sessions per week.

Reception children are required to attend full time.

Both classes have a timetable with the structure of the day. However, apart from the specialist taught areas Music, Ballet and PE, the timetables are designed to be changeable in order to allow for flexibility when dealing with small children. Timetables are available for the parents.

Snack and lunchtime arrangements – All girls have the option to have packed lunch or school dinners. All girls eat in the main dining hall. Morning only girls have the option to stay for lunch. In both early years classes the girls bring in their own morning snack. In line with the rest of the school we promote healthy eating and encourage children to develop good table manners. In Early Years we have a mixed system of free-flow and sitting altogether snack times.

#### **Early Years Team**

Miss Deborah Kennett - Associate Principal for Early Years and Designated Safeguarding Lead for Early Years

Mrs Juliet Willard – Early Years Practitioner and Assistant Infant After School Supervisor

Miss Carla Cordell – Early Years Practitioner (July 2018-July 2019 currently on Maternity Leave)

Mrs Nuria Bradley -Developing the Pedagogical Role of a TA/Paediatric First Aid Level 3 Early Years Practitioner (Temporary covering maternity leave)

Mrs Thalia Bishop – Deputy Manager for Early Years and Early Years Practitioner

Miss Kirsty Morton– Infant After School Care Supervisor

#### **Other Teaching Assistants who may need to help in Early Years when required**

Mrs Carole Shuttle – Higher Level Teaching Assistant

Miss Kirsty Morton – Level 3 Teaching Assistant

All staff working in the Early Years Department are qualified and have been DBS checked. (Please see page 10 - attached staff qualification list). All staff have undertaken Child Protection/Safeguarding courses, these are updated yearly. The Head of Early Years has also undertaken advanced regular safeguarding training with the RBWM LEA. All EYFS staff undertake the St John Ambulance 12 hour Paediatric First Aid course. There is continued professional development for all staff and Performance Management takes place yearly.

## **Key Workers**

The main key worker for Reception is the class teacher. The Assistant Reception practitioner is also a key worker, and she is active in making observations, keeping records, communicating with parents and discussing children's progress with the class teacher.

Depending on numbers each term, there will be between two and three key workers per class who are responsible for the record keeping of their own group of children. However, the nature of the classes allows for all key workers to work closely together sharing information with parents and other team members about the children's progress. The Associate Principal for Early Years is the class teacher for Reception and is responsible for all children in Early Years.

## **Ratios**

Please note numbers change termly, and extra staff will be employed depending on increasing numbers in Early Years, therefore the number of key workers could increase to maintain the correct ratios required. In Nursery and Reception, we work for the most part on a ratio of 1:8 for rising 3, 4 and 5 year olds. However, sometimes due to staff illness etc. it may become necessary for the ratio to be higher but still within the EYFS statutory requirements. For all Early Years outing ratios are decided upon depending on the nature of the outing and the risks involved but always adhering on the side of caution, (ratios are at least 1:4 but 1:3 ratio where possible).

## **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 Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stages 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 knowledge 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 other 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 Foundation Stage.
- Good communication between the Early Years team and any other outside agencies that may be involved in a child's learning and development.

## **Curriculum**

From January 2019 we are adopting the creative curriculum and this will enhance our 'in the moment planning'. This thematic approach will incorporate the EYFS and sets out all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's learning. As practitioners we understand that children learn in different ways and the Characteristics of Effective Learning are the foundations that underpin a child's learning and development.

- **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.
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Alongside the Characteristics of Effective Learning are the seven areas of learning, three prime areas and four specific areas: -

#### **Prime Areas**

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

#### **Specific Areas**

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

The curriculum for the EYFS in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning, therefore most of the planning will be cross curricular.

#### **Planning**

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage where appropriate to support the planning for individual children.

For the most part our planning is not compartmentalised and will incorporate more than just one area of learning even though a planned activity may have a particular focus or objective.

Planning is organised in three sections:

- Long Term
- Medium Term
- Short Term

#### **Long Term Planning**

This maps out the year in a general way ensuring that topics are varied, visits and outings are arranged evenly and that all learning intentions are attainable over the year.

#### **Medium Term Planning**

The aim of this planning is to ensure that, in each week, each area of learning is covered, the topic is developed and there is progression. It is mapped out in conjunction with the school calendar and is influenced by children's progress to date and the effectiveness of similar planning in the previous year. In this way, Medium Term plans are not set in stone but formulated throughout the term.

## **Short Term Planning**

Short Term Plans are outlined weekly and parents are informed about activities to be covered. Short Term Plans contain details of the activities and the objective or focus for that activity for groups or individual children.

## **Play in the Foundation Stage**

Through purposeful play young children are learning at their highest level and we acknowledge this to be an important aspect of the Foundation Stage. Through purposeful 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 work and play as part of a community. 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.

## **Objectives and Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

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 we are planning for their learning. In the Foundation Stage 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 Foundation Stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of the children, including children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguist backgrounds and those requiring special educational needs.

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.
- Encouraging the voice of the child
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes have picture cards of their next steps, encouraging them to take charge of their learning.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources that reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Welcoming, settling and building the confidence of new children and their parents so that each child makes an effective transition from home to Early Years and on to Key Stage 1.
- Encouraging social, emotional, physical, spiritual, intellectual and moral development.
- Encouraging all children to develop their full potential.
- Encouraging self-discipline by helping each child to learn independently with a respect for herself and for others so that they develop self-control.
- Treating each child as an individual and to ensure access to every part of the curriculum.
- Providing a natural and logical progression from Early Years to Year 1 through a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- Planning a curriculum that includes purposeful, creative and spontaneous play alongside practical experiences that can be structured and monitored to ensure development. To include a balance of self-initiated and adult led activities.

**EAL**

Children and parents with EAL (English as an additional language) are fully supported and resources such as visual timetables are used to help understanding.

### **Assessment/Monitoring**

We make regular assessments of children's learning, which informs teachers'/practitioners' future planning and so reflects identified needs of each child. Observation is a prime part of assessment in the EYFS and to reflect this we use a starting point check list.

Throughout the Foundation Stage, as part of the learning and teaching process, teachers/practitioners assess each child's development in relation to the seven areas of learning and Early Learning Goals that form part of the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. These assessments are made on the basis of the teachers and practitioners accumulating observations and knowledge of the whole child. By the end of the final year of the Foundation Stage, the Foundation Stage Profile will provide a way of summing up that knowledge. Profile results and learning journeys are then passed onto the Year 1 teacher so that she can assess where each child is at in their learning. The profiles are sent home to parents at the end of the foundation stage and a copy of results are sent to the LEA (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead).

As part of the monitoring and tracking process In Early Years we use the online tool '2 Build a Profile' (2-Simple) for our learning journeys. Each practitioner has her own tablet and can monitor the progress and development of the children within their key worker group by taking photos and recording observations. The observations and photos are then cross-referenced with the seven areas of learning and characteristics of effective learning. By using an online tool, the information gathered informs practitioners' future planning. Practitioners are able to identify more easily gaps in children's individual learning and development, children that may need additional support or children who need more challenging activities. Parents also have secure access to their child's learning online through the '2 Engage Parents' system (2-Simple), and have the opportunity to contribute and comment on their child's development and progress.

We also use 2 Simple for monitoring and tracking of progress in the foundation stage

### **Partnerships with parents**

We believe parents are their child's first educators and that all parents 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 their children. We do this through:

- Giving new children and parents the opportunity to spend time with their practitioner/teacher before starting school, this is usually done by the parent and child attending a Taster Morning and sessions the term before they start.
- Offering home visits for every child that is new to our Early Years Department.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Early Years Classes.
- Access to their child's online learning journey.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher.
- Parents receive next steps for their child twice termly.
- Parents have the opportunity to inform us of any 'WOW' moments through our 'WOW moment form.
- A full report is written in the Summer Term for all Early Years children.
- Regular communication with home through the child's school reading record.
- Other communication through various media, such as website, class, school newsletters and weekly e-bulletin etc.
- Opportunities for parents to help on outings.
- Having an open door policy to our parents.
- Parent meetings about the curriculum such as the phonics Letter and Sound Scheme.

## **Transitions**

The transition between the Early Years' classes is a smooth process. The children would have had many opportunities to meet with the staff and interactions with the children from both classes happen on a daily basis. When children move into the next class there are opportunities for the children to have several taster sessions before they start. The transition from Reception to Year One is a continuation of this process. Parents from Early Years are invited to attend a Transition Information Evening in the Summer/Autumn Terms to give information on the transition process between the Early Years classes to Reception and from Reception to Year 1.

The transition from home into school or from other settings is a process where the children and parents are fully supported by all team members. Parents and new girls starting in Early Years are invited to a Taster Morning the term before they start. Further subsequent taster sessions are offered to new girls starting to enable them to become familiar with the environment. Home visits also take place for all new children entering Early Years. This gives the practitioner the opportunity to see the child in their own familiar environment and to build on making strong connections and relationships with the child and their parents.

On the first day, arrangements are made to contact new parents to reassure them their child has settled.

## **Resources**

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude towards learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from, and the wider world. All resources are at the child's level and we encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe this encourages independent learning.

All resources and equipment are checked regularly for damaged or broken pieces and if un-repairable are discarded. All equipment and resources are regularly cleaned and risk assessments are in place for the indoor and outdoor environment and other areas of the school that the children have access to.

The children have access to a safe enclosed outdoor area. They also have access to extensive woodlands within the school grounds, which the children access regularly through our outdoor learning program.

The Head of Early Years is responsible for the buying of new equipment and resources. A budget is submitted yearly and requests are made to the Vice Principal for approval of any purchases.

The school also has facilities for nappy changing. We work with parents on toilet training their children and fully support parents/carers whose child is not completely toilet trained. We ask that all parents provide spare pants/nappies in their child's book bags in case of accidents.

# STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

## EARLY YEARS

Miss D Kennett: BA Hons Early Childhood Studies EYPS (Early Years Professional Status) Dip

Montessori: Head of Early Years

Mrs Juliet Willard NNEB: Early Years Practitioner

Miss Carla Cordell Level 3: Early Years Practitioner

Mrs Thalia Bishop CACHE Level 3

Mrs Nuria Bradley: Early Years Practitioner

Miss Kirsty Morton: Level 3 Diploma in Children and Young People's Workforce Early Learning and Child Care: Infant After School Supervisor

## TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Sam King CACHE Level 3 ONCWMR Level 3 Forest School Learning

Mrs C Shuttle NVQ3 Early Years Care and Education (CACHE) HLTA: Higher Level Teaching Assistant Key Stage 2