



## **St Patrick's Catholic Primary School**

Christ is the Centre of St Patrick's School, where we live, love and learn together.  
**September 2025**

### **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

***"Children are not things to be moulded, but are people to be unfolded" – Jess Lair***

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

#### **Aims**

Our Early Years curriculum has been designed to ensure that children receive their curricular entitlement in a way which is meaningful to their: context, stage of learning, capabilities, interests and prior experiences.

Children experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live, through the seven areas of learning: Communication and Language; Physical Development; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the World; Expressive Arts and Design.

Planned purposeful play provides opportunities for teaching, learning and creativity both indoors and outdoors. Children are active learners who learn through first hand experiences. We offer our children a cultural capital as we learn through topics, stories, songs, rhymes, following children's interests and offering play based, adult and child led, learning in our continuous provision.

We provide a teaching and learning environment where learners are cared for, valued and respected. Parents and practitioners work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect within which children can have security and confidence. We place a high focus on vocabulary and communication and language throughout all of our learning to allow children to develop these crucial skills.

#### **Vision**

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfill their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five 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 together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up."

Early Years Statutory Framework 2021, Department for Education

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A unique child.** 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 and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement as well as celebrations and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.
- **Positive relationships.** We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and 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. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning. Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.
- **Learning and development.** Our Reception classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas which allow the children to explore all areas of the Early Years curriculum independently and therefore grow as they play.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At St. Patrick's we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development while acknowledging that this stage in a child's life is a valid and very important time for them to learn important life skills and understanding of the world.

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a variety of their own experiences of learning and it is the role of the adults working in Reception to acknowledge each child's individual experiences and build upon them in a meaningful way. This is done by building relationships with the children and their families and asking that parents and guardians, and Reception staff work together to support the learning and development of each child.

### **A Unique Child**

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five outcomes.

We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At St. Patrick's, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child including children with additional needs.

- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Work with Key Stage 1 staff to ensure a coherent and clear progression of learning
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enable choice and decision making, encouraging independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of their background are provided with the same opportunities in school
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive

### **Learning and Development**

Learning and development is categorised into **three prime areas of learning**:

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

Additionally there are four specific areas of learning:

- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the world.
- Expressive arts and design.

Achievement of these prime and specific areas is encouraged via:

- **Playing and exploring** – Children investigate and experience things. They are willing to ‘have a go’.
- **Active learning** – Children concentrate and keep on trying if they experience difficulties. They enjoy achievements.
- **Creating and thinking critically** - Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

### **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

Good planning is the key to making children’s learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All staff who work in Reception are involved in this process.

The planning within the EYFS is based around fun and engaging topics that the children can relate to in their own way, bringing in their own previous experiences to help them to further their learning. Plans are used by the Reception team as a guide for weekly learning,

however plans may need to be adapted to meet the needs and the interests of the children throughout the term.

We make regular observations and assessments of children's learning and these are used to inform planning in order to meet each child's individual needs. Observations are recorded in Tapestry and are used to track progress and areas where children may need more support. A whole class 'floorbook' is also used to record our learning and this also allows the children to look back through their experiences, providing further opportunities for them to demonstrate and explain their understanding. Each child also has an individual book to show their learning in R.E and in phonics.

### **Learning Through Play**

At St. Patrick's we try to provide extensive opportunities for the children to learn through play. The classroom is set up so they can freely access resources to use as they see fit and there will be specific enhancements added by staff in order to meet any specific learning needs.

### **The Induction Process**

During the summer term, children and their carers will be invited in to school for an induction meeting where all relevant information will be provided about starting Reception in September. The children will then be able to see the setting along with their parents. As part of helping the children settle in to life at our school, we may offer a staggered start to the school year with the children attending reduced hours (AM) for the first week of term.

### **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the schools and parents and carers to work closely with Reception staff. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge.

We will develop this working relationship between the school and parents and carers as follows:

- We will regularly post updates on Class Dojo and our social media pages to share what we are learning.
- We will operate an "open door" policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Conversely, if Reception staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- We will hold open morning sessions and reading clubs for parents and carers to enable them to be familiar with the teaching methods used in school to make it easier to emulate them at home.

### **Intimate Care**

"Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a

child's age and stage of development they may need further help with things such as changing underwear following an accident.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

Please refer to the 'Intimate Care Policy'.

### **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Education Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support commensurate with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. The school's SEND Co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

Please refer to the 'SEND Policy'.

This policy will be reviewed in the Autumn Term 2026