



# EYFS Policy

Date:	May 2024
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*'Therefore encourage one another, and build each other up.'*

## **Vision**

At St Cecilia's, our vision is to be a community where we celebrate everyone's gifts and where everyone flourishes and grows together

We encourage each other to use our gifts for the good of others and to build up our school as a whole. We have high expectations of academic success and strong pastoral care for all in our community.

## **Introduction**

This policy is a statement of St Cecilia's Church of England Primary School's intention for the teaching and learning of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, following the requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## **Aims**

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning.
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences.
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development.
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere.
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

## **The Curriculum**

The Nursery and Reception classes follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive and support children's learning in all other areas. These areas of learning are known as the

Prime areas. In Nursery classes in particular, the focus is very much on developing children's skills in the Prime areas.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and Language – Listening, attention and understanding, and Speaking
- Physical Development – Gross motor skills and Fine motor skills.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Self-regulation, Managing self and Building relationships.

The Specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The Specific areas are:

- Literacy – Comprehension, Word reading and Writing.
- Mathematics – Number, and Numerical patterns.
- Understanding the World – Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities, and The Natural world.
- Expressive Arts and Design – Creating with materials, Being Imaginative and expressive.

## **Teaching strategies**

Teachers should ensure that there is a balance of Adult-led and Child-initiated activities across the day. When the children are choosing their own activities, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to value, model, facilitate, demonstrate, question and extend what the child is doing.

Learning through play is an important part of the EYFS. The Keys Academy Trust believes that children in the EYFS learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Teachers should use children's interests as a starting point from which to provide stimulating, active experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world.

Children will have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They will be able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives EYFS pupils the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children will learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions.

Adult-led experiences should be carefully planned for every day to enable teachers to develop children's specific skills and knowledge in each area of the curriculum. In Nursery these structured times should focus on the Prime Areas of development and early Literacy and Maths skills, as well as developing a love of music and stories. In Reception the Adult-led experiences should focus on all seven areas of the curriculum, and include a daily structured Phonics session, writing session and Maths session.

## **Classroom organisation**

The Early Years classrooms should have defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure the children can access them easily. Both Nursery and Reception should be set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning. Classrooms should have a writing area, maths area, creative area, book corner, role play area, construction/small world area, sand and water area, malleable play area, music area and outdoor area.

## **Planning**

Staff should plan short thematic topics designed to inspire, fire the imagination and enthuse the children. Topics should be derived from children's interests with the staff team working closely together to ensure planned activities closely meet the children's needs. Planning will include Adult directed activities and enhancements to the continuous provision that the children can access during their Child-initiated activities. The children and staff should work together collaboratively to come up with creative ideas for how the continuous provision and role play area can be adapted for each topic.

In Reception, Phonics lessons should be planned and taught using the Read Write Inc programme, to develop children's skills as rapidly as possible from their starting points on entry.

The maths lessons follow the 'Mastering Number' scheme and includes a practical focus to ensure pupils master key early maths skills.

Children's progress will be monitored closely throughout the EYFS, enabling the staff to respond quickly to any gaps in skills or understanding through Adult Directed lessons that focus on particular areas of weakness. Individual and group support will be provided to help children make progress with key skills.

## **Inclusion in the EYFS**

We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this in a sensitive and inclusive way, taking account of each child's background, culture and range of life experiences when planning their learning activities.

In EYFS, we have high expectations and challenge our children to learn effectively within a supportive and appropriate environment. We ensure that we meet the needs of our children, so that they can achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. We also encourage progress beyond this point if suitable in meeting the needs of the child. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of the diverse groups of children in our school.

We meet the needs of all our children by:

- Ensuring the children are accurately baselined upon entry to school, in order to identify learning needs.
- 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.
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress and acting to provide support as necessary.
- Observing the children on a regular basis to ensure they have the key Personal, Social and Emotional skills to communicate.

## **Assessment**

On entry to Reception, a baseline assessment will be carried out on each child using the STA Reception Baseline Assessment. The baseline assessment will be completed within the first 6 weeks of starting school.

Ongoing assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

At the end of the Reception year, class teachers must assess each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and report to the Local Authority on whether their development within each ELG is either 'Emerging' or 'Expected'. This information will be communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report and shared with Year 1 teachers in handover meetings.

## **Partnership with parents and carers**

The Keys Academy Trust believes that the involvement of parents and carers in a child's education is vital and therefore staff should work very closely with parents and carers to ensure they are involved in their child's education. Staff should offer an open-door policy where parents and carers are always welcome to discuss any queries or concerns.

A well planned transition process should be in place to support children joining the Nursery and Reception classes. Nursery children should receive home visits, attend Stay and Play sessions with their parents and then be offered a short unaccompanied visit before starting Nursery. Children joining Reception will be visited in their current Nursery by their new teacher and invited to two school visits to meet their class and teacher. Parents will be invited to an information evening and tour of the school and Reception classrooms. All pupils should receive information packs before starting.

Once the children are part of the school we offer many ways for parents to be involved in and support their child's learning. These include:

- Weekly reading books
- Parent workshops
- Parents' Evenings
- Stay and Play sessions
- Timetables and curriculum overviews available on the website
- Parents invited to share experiences with the class such as a new baby, Diwali celebrations, their job role as a doctor/nurse/police officer
- Opportunities to help with cooking, reading stories, library visits, local walks and school trips