

ST. TERESA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

'Christ be in our heads, in our hearts and in our hands'

Early Years Policy

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Aims
4. Learning and development
5. Inclusion
6. The learning environment and outdoor spaces
7. Assessment
8. Safeguarding and welfare
9. Mobile phones and devices
10. Health and safety
11. Staff taking medication or other substances
12. Staffing
13. Information and records
14. Parental involvement
15. Transition periods
16. Monitoring and review

Statement of Intent

At St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School, we greatly value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **A Christ centred learning environment** where every child feels loved, unique and special.
- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Data Protection Act 2018 – General Data Protection Regulation

1.2. This policy has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2023) 'Working together to safeguard children'
- DfE (2015) 'The prevent duty: For schools and childcare providers'
- DfE (2006) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act'
- OFSTED 'Inspecting safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills'.

1.3. This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Single Equality Policy
- Privacy Notice for Pupils (GDPR)
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Medical Conditions – Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Parent Involvement Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. The governing board has the overall responsibility for ensuring there is a policy in place to safeguard children that includes an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child, the use of mobile phones and cameras, and staff safeguarding training requirements. These issues are addressed in part in this policy and in further detail in the school's Safeguarding Policy.
- 2.2. The governing board has the overall responsibility for ensuring there is a policy in place in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. These issues are addressed in the school's Whistle Blowing Policy.
- 2.3. The governing board has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 2.4. The governing board has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 2.5. The governing board has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy and Procedures.
- 2.6. The Key Stage Leader, in conjunction with the headteacher, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- 2.7. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.
- 2.8. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.

3. Aims

3.1. Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Create a culture of vigilance where pupil welfare is promoted and where timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken for pupils who need extra help or who may be suffering or likely to suffer harm.
- Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- Enable each child to develop spiritually, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- Support the health and safety and well-being of every child, including their mental health and online safety
- Give all learners, particularly the most disadvantaged, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life

- Work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

3.2. Our approach is Christ centred and guided by four early years principles which shape our practice:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between the school and parents.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

3.3. To put these principles into practice, the school:

- Provides a balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Works in partnership with parents.
- Plans challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
- Implements a key person approach to develop close relationships with children.
- Provides a safe and secure learning environment.

4. Learning and development

4.1. The EYFS curriculum is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development.

4.2. In partnership with parents, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

4.3. Our inclusive classroom environments are designed to reduce visual stimulation for our pupils. The EYFS team consider the use of colour and sensory stimulation when creating displays and areas within the classroom.

4.4. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two sections – prime and specific; however, all the sections are interconnected and important.

4.5. The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

- **Communication and language**
 - Listening, attention and understanding
 - Speaking

- **Physical development**

- Gross Motor
- Fine Motor

- **Personal, social and emotional development**

- Self-regulation
- Managing self
- Building relationships

4.6. The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

- **Literacy**

- Word reading
- Writing
- Comprehension

- **Mathematics**

- Numbers
- Numerical patterns

- **Understanding the world**

- People, culture and communities
- The Natural World
- Past and Present

- **Expressive arts and design**

- Creating with materials
- Being imaginative and expressive.

4.7. Activities are planned to reflect children's interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.

4.8. The class teacher will discuss any cause for concern with parents, regarding a child's progress, especially in the prime areas of learning. A strategy of support will be agreed and the child's progress will be carefully monitored. If concerns persist, consideration will be taken as to whether the child may have a special educational need or disability which requires additional assessment.

4.9. The school takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with EAL to use their home language in play and learning whilst also ensuring that these children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English. During assessment, if a child is found to not have a strong grasp on English, the class teacher will contact

the child's parents to establish their home language skills to assess if there is cause for concern about a language delay.

4.10. Each area of learning and development will be implemented through continuous provision and a mix of adult-led and pupil-initiated activity.

4.11. The school will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through friendly and positive interaction.

4.12. Activities are planned with regard to three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS. The Characteristics of Effective Learning describe behaviours children use in order to learn. To learn well, children must approach opportunities with curiosity, energy and enthusiasm. Effective learning must be meaningful to a child, so that they are able to use what they have learned and apply it in new situations. These abilities and attitudes of strong learners will support them to learn well and make good progress in all the Areas of Learning and Development.

- **Playing and exploring – Engagement**
- **Active learning – Motivation**
- **Creating and thinking critically – Thinking.**

5. Inclusion

5.1. All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender.

5.2. The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

5.3. The **Single Equality Policy** ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.

5.4. The **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy** ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible.

5.5. SEND provision within the EYFS setting will be monitored by the class teachers and the SENDCo. Overall responsibility and leadership will be the responsibility of the SENDCo.

6. The learning environment and outdoor spaces

6.1. The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment; moving freely between the two classrooms and the outdoor classroom.

6.2. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and daily outdoor activities are planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.

- 6.3. There are toilet facilities available to the EYFS, and there are hygienic changing facilities located near the Reception classes containing a supply of wipes and spare clothes. A changing bed is located within the disabled toilet area. An intimate care plan will be issued for pupils with SEND or medical needs.

7. Assessment

- 7.1. Assessment plays an important part in helping the staff to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.
- 7.2. During the initial few weeks of the Autumn term, practitioners collate a range of information to formulate a baseline. This involves gathering information from home, the previous childcare provider, transition days in school and from observations/assessments of each pupil.
- 7.3. The standardised Reception Baseline Assessment is completed by the class teacher, key stage leader and trained practitioners.
- 7.4. Formative assessments are used to assess the learning and development of children in the EYFS. All practitioners will observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. This information will then be used to shape learning experiences for each child.
- 7.5. Reasonable adjustments will be made to the assessment process for children with SEND as appropriate.
- 7.6. Parents will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and the class teachers will address any learning and development need in partnership with parents. Parents will receive a mid-term report and they will be invited to attend a parents' evening. At the end of the final term in Reception, the class teacher will send a summary of the Early Learning Goal assessments to the Local Authority for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. This information is also shared with parents in the form of an end-of-year report.
- 7.7. Early identification of difficulties is prioritised by all members of staff, especially in relation to the prime areas of learning.

8. Safeguarding and welfare

At St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the legislation above.

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe. The Designated Safeguarding Leads put in place effective arrangements to:

- Identify children and learners who may need early help or are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming or exploitation

- Help prevent abuse by raising awareness among children of safeguarding risks and how and where to get help and support if they need it
 - Help those children who are at risk of abuse and need early help or statutory social care involvement, keeping accurate records, making timely referrals where necessary and working with other agencies to ensure that children and learners get the help and support they need
 - Manage allegations about adults who may be a risk and check the suitability of staff to work with children, learners and vulnerable adults.
- 8.1. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the **Safeguarding Policy**, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.
 - 8.2. The DSL is Mrs Jillian Holmes.
 - 8.3. The deputy DSL is Mrs Julie Hawitt.
 - 8.4. The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate.
 - 8.5. The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence.
 - 8.6. The DSL and deputy DSL will undertake safeguarding training and safer recruitment training as required.
 - 8.7. Staff and volunteers working with children will be carefully selected and vetted according to statutory requirements. Once appointed, consideration will be given to their ongoing suitability in order to prevent the opportunity for harm to children or place them at risk.
 - 8.8. The DSL will ensure the single central record is kept up to date; recording information relating to all members of staff and volunteers including the date a check was obtained and details of who obtained it.
 - 8.9. Staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues (including the prevent duty and child-on-child abuse), and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect. All staff and volunteers understand the importance of teaching children how to keep themselves safe from all types of abuse
 - 8.10. Written records will be made in an appropriate and timely way and will be held securely where practitioners working with children are concerned about their safety or welfare. Practitioners will use CPOMs to record and share necessary information/ actions. These records will be shared appropriately and, where necessary, with consent.
 - 8.11. A written plan with a clear and agreed procedure will be in place for vulnerable pupils. The plan will identify the help that the child should receive and the action to be taken if a professional has further concerns or information to report.

8.12. All practitioners will limit the risk of a pupil missing from the school by ensuring the premises is locked and secure. They will follow the Missing Child Procedure in the event of an emergency.

8.13. Leaders and practitioners will oversee the safe use of technology when children are in their care and take action immediately if they are concerned about bullying or children's well-being.

8.14. All practitioners will manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.

8.15. The key stage leader and class teachers will ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for.

9. Mobile phones and device

9.1. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'mobile phone' refers to any electronic device that can be used to take images or record videos, including tablets.

Use of mobile phones by staff members

9.2. Staff members must not use personal mobile phones or cameras when children are present.

9.3. Staff may use mobile phones on school premises outside of working hours when no children are present.

9.4. Staff may use mobile phones in the staffroom during breaks and non-contact time.

9.5. Mobile phones should be safely stored and in silent mode whilst children are present. Mobile phones must not be used in the classrooms.

9.6. Staff may take mobile phones on trips, but they must only be used in emergencies and should not be used when children are present. Mobile phones must not be used to take images or videos at any time during trips.

9.7. Staff who do not adhere to this policy will face disciplinary action.

9.8. Staff may use their professional judgement in emergency situations.

9.9. Staff must report any concerns about another staff member's use of mobile phones to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the **Safeguarding Policy**.

Use of mobile phones by parents, visitors and contractors

9.10. Posters are used around the school to indicate that it's a mobile free zone.

9.11. Parents, visitors and contractors are not permitted to take photographs or record videos without prior permission.

9.12. Parents may take photographs and videos only containing their own child during school events for their own personal use/data.

- 9.13. Parents may take group photographs at school events but only with the informed consent of the parents of the children involved.
- 9.14. The school strongly advises against the publication of any photographs or videos taken at the school or school events on social media
- 9.15. Staff must report all concerns about parents, visitors and contractors to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the **Safeguarding Policy**.

Use of the school's mobile phones and cameras

- 9.16. Staff are provided with a school device to ensure that only school devices are used to take photographs and videos.
- 9.17. School devices must have passcode protection.
- 9.18. School devices must only be used for work related matters.
- 9.19. Staff must not take photographs of bruising or injuries for child protection reasons. Instead, recording concerns forms and body maps are used to record observations relating to child protection concerns – these can be acquired from the DSL.
- 9.20. School devices must not be taken off school premises without prior permission from the headteacher.
- 9.21. Where staff members have concerns over material on a school device, they must report all concerns to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the **Safeguarding Policy**.

10. Health and safety

- 10.1. A first-aid box is located in the learning resource area.
- 10.2. Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist will be administered.
- 10.3. The school's **Administering Medication Policy** outlines the procedures for administering medicines.
- 10.4. The class teacher will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents via a letter.
- 10.5. Accidents and injuries will be recorded in an accident book, located in the medical room and documented on CPOMs.
- 10.6. The headteacher will report any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the school's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.

10.7. The school has a **Fire Evacuation Plan** in place.

10.8. Any food or drink provided to children is healthy, balanced and nutritious.

10.9. Information about any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements a child has will be recorded and displayed in the staff room and in each class.

10.10. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

10.11. Smoking is not permitted on the school premises.

11. Staffing

11.1. A robust **Safer Recruitment Policy** is in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable.

11.2. Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.

11.3. Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.

11.4. All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be appraised and supervised by the Key Stage Leader. The supervision will provide opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
- Identify solutions to address issues.
- Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.

11.5. There will be at least one member of staff on the school premises at all times who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate.

11.6. Any member of staff who has sole responsibility for looking after a group of children will also hold a PFA certificate.

11.7. All newly qualified staff with a level 2 or 3 qualification will be PFA trained.

11.8. The school will organise PFA training to be renewed every three years.

11.9. The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found in the staff room.

11.10. The school provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

11.11. The school adopts the following staffing ratios:

- Reception classes in maintained schools are subject to infant class size legislation (infant classes no larger than 30 pupils) and should have a qualified teacher present.

Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios.

11.12. Each child is assigned a key person whose role it is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and that every child feels they have a trusted adult caring for them and listening to them.

11.13. The **class teacher** will inform parents of whom their child's key person is and will explain the role of the key person when their child begins attending the school.

12. Information and records

12.1. Information is stored in line with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and with regard to the school's **Privacy Notice for Pupils (GDPR)**.

12.2. The following information is recorded for each child:

- The child's name and date of birth
- The name and address of every parent or carer who is known to the school, and which parent or carer the child normally lives with
- The emergency contact details of the child's parent or carer

12.3. The following information about the school is recorded:

- The school's name, address and telephone number
- The school's certificate of registration
- The name, address and telephone number of anyone who will regularly be in unsupervised contact with the children
- A daily record of the names of the children being cared for in the school, their hours of attendance, and the names of each child's key person

12.4. The following information is made available to parents:

- The school's privacy notice
- How the school delivers the EYFS and how parents can access more information
- The daily routine and the activities offered in the school's EYFS and how parents can assist their child's learning at home
- How the school's EYFS supports children with SEND
- Information about the policies and procedures in place in the school's EYFS

12.5. Ofsted will be notified if there are any changes to the following:

- The address of the school
- The school's contact details
- The hours during which care is provided
- Any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of the school or any person who cares for, or is in regular contact with, children to look after children

13. Parental involvement

13.1. We firmly believe that the EYFS cannot function without the enduring support of parents. Practitioners share information regarding their child's learning experiences via an app called Seesaw. Parents are strongly encouraged to log on to observe what their child has been learning and comment on it. Parents are also encouraged to contribute to their child's learning and development using pupil targets and the Seesaw app.

13.2. Early Years Teachers meet with parents before their child starts school to gather information about their child's interests, personalities, needs and any concerns they may have. Parents are invited to a phonics workshop in the Autumn Term to discuss how they can support their child with their phonics development. Parents are invited to a parents' evening in the Spring Term; however, the school has an open-door policy and parents are welcome to talk to teachers at the start and end of the school day. Parents are also invited to book an appointment to discuss their child's end of year report during the Summer term, should they wish to.

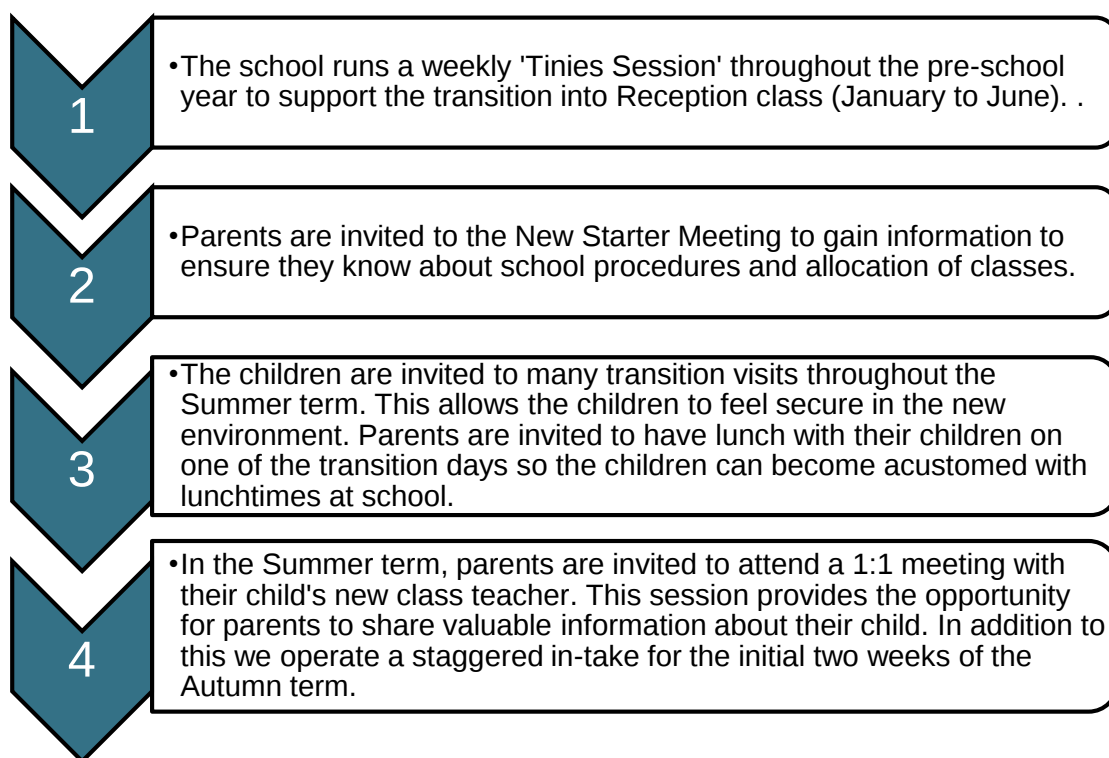
13.3. A quiet room will be utilised for confidential discussions between staff and parents.

13.4. Parents are asked to sign permission slips for any visits out of school, use of photographs of their child and using the internet at school.

13.5. Parents are asked to complete admission forms including medical forms before their child starts school.

14. Transition periods

The following process is in place to ensure children's successful transition to Reception:



15. Monitoring and review

15.1. This policy is reviewed every two years by the governing board and the headteacher.

15.2. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

15.3. All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.

15.4. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2026.**