

St Nicholas Catholic Primary School EYFS policy

Rationale:

At St Nicholas, pupils learn in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) through a strategic balance of continuous and enhanced provision. This approach places children at the centre of their own learning experience, allowing them to make choices about their activities, fostering independence, autonomy, and a sense of responsibility.

Our curriculum provides access to a range of materials and resources to enable children to engage in self-directed learning. This independence supports the development of problem-solving skills and critical thinking, which are crucial for long-life learning. We also provide pupils with the opportunity to explore different activities at their own pace; this freedom encourages creativity and imaginative play, which are fundamental constructs of cognitive and social development.

The nature of our approach at St Nicholas caters for diverse learning styles and abilities. Children can engage with tasks that are appropriate for their developmental stage, ensuring that each child is challenged and supported in their learning journey.

Principles of EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year (FY). In our school, all children join us, at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

The unique learner

At St Nicholas Catholic Primary School, we recognise that every child is a competent learner, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We encourage independence in our classroom to allow all of our children to be independent learners. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. The Early Years staff recognise their role as scaffolders to children's learning in the classroom. It is their role to push the children, with guidance and support, out of their comfort zone; recognising each child's unique potential.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at St Nicholas are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within 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. In the

EYFS, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. 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 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.

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We provide children with choices to help them develop these important life skills. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

Safety and welfare

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."

At St Nicholas Catholic Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for EYFS.

We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children including when eating;
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose;
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs;
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Environment organisation - continuous provision

Resources for continuous provision are available all of the time for all pupils to access independently. These are stored in clearly labelled boxes so that children can choose the resources that they want to learn with and then tidy them away

afterwards. During continuous provision, the role of the adult is to use deeper level questioning to move children's learning forward and allow them to progress from what they can achieve independently to what they can achieve with adult guidance. Continuous provision can be linked to topics, themes and key texts but these links must be made meaningfully.

Continuous provision - areas of learning

At St Nicholas, pupils can engage in free-flow child-led learning, which means that they can access both the indoor and outdoor areas seamlessly. The following areas of learning are a permanent fixture in the EYFS environment.

Indoors	Outdoors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small world• Reading• Maths (+ challenge)• Junk modelling• Fine motor/malleable• Construction• Creative• Writing (+ challenge)• Role play• Prayer and liturgy (+ challenge)• Communication & language• PSED	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planting• Mud kitchen (inc. changing area)• Bug house• Digging• Climbing• Large physical equipment• Reading• Large scale mark making (water, chalks, paints)• Water• Investigation

Phonics is not an area of learning explored during continuous provision and is instead taught in isolation during RWI sessions; this avoids misconceptions being created and embedded when the class teacher is not present. However, pupils will be encouraged, by the teacher, to apply their learnt phonic skills during reading and writing activities within continuous provision.

Teaching expectations - enhanced provision

Teachers at St Nicholas approach teaching and learning in the EYFS in a way that ensures a crucial balance between curriculum coverage and child-initiated exploration. Enhanced provision is planned carefully (see Appendix 2), by the teacher, to provide opportunities for pupils to meet specific learning intentions and objectives that allow them to achieve a good level of development.

Teachers are expected to teach the following in the EYFS per week (15 minute sessions):

- 3x Maths - Following the White Rose curriculum
- 2x RE - Following the Diocesan People of God framework
- 3x English - Following the St Nicholas long term writing curriculum
- Daily phonics (separate timings) - Following Read Write Inc.

Evidence is gathered, when appropriate, and included in the class learning journal and on Tapestry,

From Autumn 2, to gather evidence to support these learning areas, pupils self-direct to planned and differentiated challenge stations where they will independently complete an activity that consolidates the main teacher input. The class teacher then checks this work for misconceptions before addressing these and filing the work in the pupil's individual folders for RE, Maths and English. The

number of challenges that pupils are required to complete each week increases as the academic year progresses. Children's completion of these challenges is self-directed using the classroom challenge station; this is carefully monitored by adults to ensure that all pupils are accessing their learning each week.

Parental support and involvement

We recognise that parents are children's first educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school in their home environment;
- providing the children with the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during visits in the summer term and transition day; the teachers discuss with Nurseries and Pre-schools to meet the children and discuss their progress with their key workers;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our EYFS class;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- end of year progress report against the ELGs;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- expectations for parents to complete reading and other homework tasks with their children.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Transition to Year 1

To ensure a smooth transition to Year 1 and address gaps identified through pupils' end of year assessments, children continue to learn through carefully planned, enhanced provision during the first half-term. However, to prepare pupils for the demands of the National Curriculum, this is implemented in a more structured way than that of the EYFS. Planning for Year 1 is evidenced on the St Nicholas planning proformas for Maths, English and RE. During the afternoons of Autumn 1 in Year 1, the National Curriculum content for foundation subjects will be covered using a practical and creative approach. Worksheets will be used sparingly and evidence will be gathered via the class learning journal.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy has been reviewed and ratified by the governing body. It will be reviewed biennially by the EYFS teacher and Assistant Head Teacher.

Members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will monitor and evaluate adherence to the policy.

Policy written by: K. Smith

Review date: September 2027

Appendix 1 - Resources for continuous provision	
Indoor	Outdoor
<p>Small world</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of small figures e.g. dinosaurs, cars • Backgrounds to use the figures e.g car park, dolls house etc. • Books about families, friendships, jobs, animals 	<p>Waterproof suits and wellies with pegs for wellies and instructions to get changed.</p> <p>Mud kitchen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sink • Utensils • Instructions to make mud pies etc. • Loose natural materials e.g. leaves, pine cones, stones • Water butt
<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of fiction, non-fiction and poetry • Newspapers and magazines • Author of the half term • Blankets and cushions • Nothing phonics related <p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clipboards • Whiteboards • Different types of paper and pens • Name mats • Alphabet strips • Word mats 	<p>Planting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeds • Watering cans • Trowels • Labels for plants
<p>Maths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number cards • Shapes • Clocks • Dice • Jigsaws • Measuring jugs • Scales • Sorting trays • Rulers and tape measures • Money • Number fans • Calculators • Whiteboards and pens • Numicon • Counting and number books 	<p>Digging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large construction vehicles • Spades • Tyres filled with natural materials • Watering cans • Hard hats • Hi-vis jackets • Pictures of well-known buildings • Traffic cones
<p>Creative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junk modelling • Scissors • Different types of collage materials and 	<p>Climbing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wooden and metal climbing frame/bars • Large tree stumps

<p>craft resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painting easel • Different types of paper • Pens/pencils/chalks • Aprons • Sponges and rollers • Examples of famous artists' work 	
<p>Fine motor/malleable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacing • Threading • Play dough • Pattern making • Tweezers • Pegs and boards 	<p>Large, physical equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bikes, trikes and scooter • Hula hoops • Stilts • Balls • Skipping ropes
<p>Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blocks • Hard hats • Small cars and diggers • Hi-vis jackets • Ramps • Plastic tools • Books about construction jobs etc. 	<p>Large scale mark making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paintbrushes • Rollers • Water • Chalk
<p>Prayer and liturgy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rosary beads • Prayer hands • Children's Bibles • Coloured cloths • Liturgically relevant resources • Candle 	<p>Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colours • Water toys • Funnels • Measuring jugs • Utensils
<p>Communication and language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking tins • Sentence builders • Mirrors • Prompt/question cards • Puppets 	<p>Investigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small bugs • Microscopes • Magnifying glasses • Bug classification sheets • Binoculars
<p>Music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage • Dressing up • Instruments • Microphones 	
<p>PSED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings faces and books 	
<p>Role play</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dressing up • Props • Masks 	
Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I pads for virtual classroom and/or educational games • Digital cameras • Talking tins • Remote control toys • Music players and headphones 	

Appendix 2 - EYFS planning proforma

EYFS weekly planning - enhanced provision

Area of learning	Topic Focus	Learning objective (reference to ELGs)	Differentiated task	Resources
Week beginning				
Writing			Bronze: Silver: Gold:	
Mathematics			Bronze: Silver: Gold:	
RE			Bronze: Silver: Gold:	
Week beginning				
Writing			Bronze: Silver: Gold:	
Mathematics			Bronze: Silver:	