



St. Gabriel's RC Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Updated: July 2022

Review: July 2024

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Approved by:	Full Governing Board	Date: July 2022
Last reviewed on:	September 2024	
Next review due by:	September 2026	

In God's Love: We Welcome
We Learn
We Grow
TOGETHER

Showing re**S**pect for everyone and everything

We are s**t**ronger, together,

Keeping the **G**ospel values in our hearts,

We are proud to be **a** part of a hard-working team.

Everyone a mem**b**er of God's family,

Progressing th**r**ough life, progressing through faith,

Walking **i**n Jesus' footsteps,

Learning for lif**e**, following our dreams.

We are al**l** unique, but all equal

Sharing God'**s** love through friendship and
mutual respect.

Introduction

Our Early Years settings consists of 1 Reception class. We have a new intake each September; where children come to us from a wide variety of settings. An excellent transition and phased start in September is key to enabling our children to settle in, feel safe and happy and ready to flourish under our care.

Intent

At St. Gabriel's it is our aim to provide a firm foundation for all children in our setting. We see them as unique individuals and strive to develop them as a whole, boost confidence, nurture their emotions to create positive relationships and spark their curiosity and understanding of the world around them. This, we believe, enables them to grow and mature into responsible citizens who have dreams and aspirations for their future. We place a strong emphasis on the religious, spiritual, moral and cultural development of all of our children. We celebrate and welcome the differences within our school community.

Independence is a key skill that with adult modelling, high expectations and an enriching environment offering lots of possibilities, enables us to develop this skill at all opportunities. We aim to provide rich opportunities throughout our EYFS curriculum to support learning, consolidate and deepen knowledge and ensure children meet their next steps. We prepare children to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Foundation stage and ensure children make good progress from their starting points and a smooth transition into Year 1.

Implementation

When children enter St. Gabriel's we complete baseline assessments which means that we know each child's various starting points and can tailor learning opportunities individually. Where possible we bring children's interests into our curriculum in order for strong engagement to support their learning. We use a mixture of whole class learning, teacher focus groups and child-led learning in continuous provision. Child initiated learning is valued and encouraged. Rainbow challenges are planned for and link to different areas of learning as invitations to play, these develop throughout the year. Children are encouraged to be independent from the outset and throughout the year, this, alongside formal recording progresses through the year in order to aid transition into Year 1.

Children have access to a variety of inviting areas within the classroom and in our outdoor environment. These are resourced with open-ended objects and enhancements added when needed. Enhancements could be linked to current topic themes; child interest; seasonal themes; or linked to developing a key skill. This allows our children to gain new knowledge and skills which are transferrable, with

opportunities for these to be revisited and embedded. Staff are a key resource in the EYFS classroom. We use different varieties of modelling, observing and challenging the children in order to move their learning forward. Online tools and paper based observations are made, some of which are shared with parents via our online platform; Seesaw.

Our curriculum is planned for to ensure that it is broad, balanced and progressive. Planning is designed to be rich, engaging and memorable with the flexibility to ensure that a child's unique needs and interests are supported. We use Development Matters to provide guidance to staff and support them making judgements against the Early Learning Goals at the end of the year. The seven areas of learning set out in the EYFS curriculum are shown below.

Prime Areas

Personal, social and emotional development

Physical development

Communication and Language

Specific Areas

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and design

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active and through creative and critical thinking, these are known as the characteristics of effective learning:

- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
- Active learning – children keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

We ensure that activities support the Characteristics of effective learning, this is both indoors and outside. Our outside areas are used all year round and in most weather conditions where possible. A number of key resources are used to support the development of the curriculum including; Development matters; White Rose Maths, Mastering Number, Ruth Miskin phonics and stories and Come and See (Religious Education programme of study).

We are proud that our Early Years team are well trained in Speech & Language to aid children's communication. We use an assessment tool, WELLCOMM and TALC to assess children throughout the year, this enables us to deliver targeted support to individuals. We work alongside our in-house speech and language therapist, who also assesses children's abstract language and verbal reasoning (Via TALC). We use the outcomes of this to direct our questioning and use of language at an appropriate level for each child. We value talk and promote this often whilst broadening our children's vocabulary.

Our parents are valued as first educators and every effort is made to inform them of the EYFS curriculum, whilst providing them with the tools to continue learning at home. Parents are encouraged to share their child's achievements from home, these are then celebrated within school. Strategies to include and inform parents include the use of an online platform called Seesaw, parents are able to receive regular updates linked to what their child has been learning that week, parent meetings, workshops, 'stay and play' sessions, parent readers, reading records and our class page on the school website.

Impact

We want each child to get the best possible start in life and be ready to thrive not only in KS1 but to be confident life-long learners. We strive to ensure that all of our children make good progress during their time in Reception. At St. Gabriel's we do this by ensuring ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning process, these assessments are used to plan next steps. This also allows for quick interventions to be put into place for children who may struggle and children who require support from outside agencies are identified as early as possible. At the end of Reception, the EYFS profile is completed for each child where they are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals. EYFS staff are committed to raising standards by attending relevant professional development, external moderations with the Local Authority and the Catholic Federation schools and regular pupil progress meetings to ensure progress is being made for each individual child.

Children who achieve the expected standard within the Early Learning Goals will have the knowledge and skills needed to continue their learning journey. We understand the differing levels within each range of an Early Learning goal. Effective communication between Reception and KS1 staff is therefore crucial to achieve an effective transition for children and next steps and support can be planned for accordingly.

Children will leave the Early Years with transferable skills, they will be strong communicators and confident learners. Good behaviour, respectful listeners and routines will be embedded, they will be kind, respectful and honest. Children will demonstrate perseverance and emotional resilience and take pride in all that they do, always striving to do their best.