



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY REVIEWED NOVEMBER 2016

Reviewed by Curriculum Committee on 1/11/16

Glossary

EYFS : Early Years Foundation stage

ELG : Early Learning Goals

Foundation Stage Policy

Our Lady of Pity is a Catholic School and as such, seeks to ensure that the children develop spiritually according to the teachings of the Catholic Faith. All teaching in Foundation Stage embraces the paramount importance of the children's spiritual development, and its significance in the wider community.

The Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to five years. In our school, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

(Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.)

Children whose birthdays fall after December can opt to attend part-time – a conversation between parent and teacher will take place within the first few weeks of the Autumn term.

Our Lady of Pity sets its own criteria regarding Full time/Part time attendance.

The school works closely with the Pre-Schools on both sites and we foster close communication of assessments and other information that assist smooth transition between F1 (Pre-School) and F2 (Reception).

The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles:

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

A Unique Child

At Our Lady of Pity 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, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others: we use their own self assessment and encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate because of 'differences'. All children at Our Lady of Pity are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all of 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 learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources that 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.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children about boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with appropriate choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy).

Welfare

At Our Lady of Pity we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- 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 develop 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.

We endeavour to meet these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At Our Lady of Pity we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring 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.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents in the autumn and spring terms at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year in July.
- Arranging a Literacy/Numeracy open sessions throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents.
- Offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's home/school communication book. We invite parents to a phonic/writing/maths meeting to discuss the progression and stages of development the children undertake in the reception class. In all other areas of the curriculum we encourage parents to participate and support learning.

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

Enabling Environments

At Our Lady of Pity we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within EYFS is based around different themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning, however the teacher may alter these in response to the needs (achievements/occurrences and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning and will inform future plans. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways and used to inform EYFSP. Within the final term of EYFS, we provide attainment results to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and ages and stages. The parents are given the

opportunity to discuss these judgements with the class teacher and parents are encouraged to complete a feedback sheet. The final assessments done at the end of the year are used to inform the child's next class teacher to highlight strengths and development needs.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Class is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The class is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Foundation Unit has its own enclosed outdoor area on both sites. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all areas of learning. We also ensure that children experience a range of trips outside the school to develop their experiences and learning further.

Learning and Development

At Our Lady of Pity we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS and continue into in Key Stages 1&2. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- Making optimum use of the local community as an educational resource, taking the children on a variety of trips throughout the year;
- The teaching style embraces the different learning styles of the children. E.g. kinaesthetic.
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the ELG's by the end of Foundation Stage; extending into National Curriculum for Key Stage 1 where appropriate;
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, social and emotional abilities;
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence, self-management, and the ability to resolve personal conflict and disagreements with others;

- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- The clear aims for our work, and the regular reflecting and monitoring (between the two sites) to evaluate and improve what we do;
- The close communication between parents/carers and staff including workshops/open sessions to facilitate understanding of teaching methods.

Playing and Exploring

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of three prime areas and four specific areas of learning.

Three Prime Areas:

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

Four Specific Areas:

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

Three Characteristics of learning:

- Playing and exploring

- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the Foundation teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named governor responsible for the EYFS currently Anna Turnbull. This governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the governing body, raising any issues that need discussing. The Head teacher and Assistant Head teachers carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.