



# SS John Fisher & Thomas More Catholic Primary School

A Voluntary Academy

"Journeying together with Jesus Christ, we learn to love and love to learn."



## EYFS Teaching and Learning Policy

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## EYFS Teaching and Learning Policy

### Aims:

At St John Fisher we seek to ensure learning in the EYFS is broad, balanced and engaging. We want our children to receive the very best start to their education journey and we keep this in mind when delivering the EYFS curriculum. This policy explains how we deliver the EYFS curriculum and what our day to day teaching practice looks like.

### Learning Through Play

In EYFS the majority of learning should be done through a balance of adult led and child initiated play. It is vital that children have access to high quality continuous provision that promotes independence, allows them to make choices and to explore their own creativity and ideas. When supporting children during play, adults need to avoid directing play too much and spoiling the children's interest in the activity. Adults should join in with play and avoid asking lots of questions as this can put unnecessary pressure on the child and often results in them walking away. When supporting children through play adults should:

- Show genuine interest and enthusiasm for the game or activity
- Play on the children's level, not sitting in a chair or standing above them
- Remember a ratio of 4 comments to every 1 question you ask
- Provide a commentary of what you or the child is doing to model language, e.g. "I am going to put this fluffy sheep in the field because I know sheep love to eat grass"
- Consider how you can move play or learning forwards without changing the game too much
- Keep the child's next steps in mind but do not force it if it does not lend itself naturally to the game.
- Model social skills and 'Think Out Loud' during the game e.g. "I wonder if John would like to join in this game, he really likes dinosaurs and I can see he is on his own."
- Model good habits and Think out Loud, "I have finished with these dinosaurs, I need to put them away before I move to another area."

### Learning Environments and Continuous Provision

EYFS classrooms should provide a stimulating, well organised learning environment that allows children to learn through play across all seven areas of learning. Continuous provision should be:

- Appealing to the children
- Well organised
- Accessible for the children – no heavy boxes or 'out of bounds' resources
- Clearly labelled using photos and text
- Enhanced appropriately (based on assessments, theme or children's interests)
- Clutter free – only provide the right number of resources needed, e.g. 6 pencils if there are 6 chairs, not 20 pencils.

Reception and Nursery staff will decide which areas of continuous provision are most appropriate for their classrooms and will ensure that classrooms do not become cramped or cluttered. Below are some examples of continuous provision areas teachers may consider having in their classrooms. Areas expected in all EYFS classrooms are in bold:

- **Prayer table/alter**
- **Writing area/writing opportunities in most areas of provision**
- **Maths area/ maths opportunities in most areas of provision**
- **Creative areas – role play and making areas**
- Sand area
- Water area
- Listening station
- **Reading area**
- Investigation area
- Construction area
- Small World area
- Investigation area/curiosity cube
- Calm area
- Loose Parts play
- Sensory area
- Fine Motor Area
- Malleable area/Play dough

The Nursery team are responsible for the entire Nursery environment; this should be consistent throughout the Nursery classroom and should reflect the exciting curriculum the children experience. The Reception team are responsible for the Reception environment; this should be consistent across both Reception classrooms and should also reflect the exciting curriculum the children experience.

Children are to be encouraged to look after their belongings and classroom equipment, to return equipment to its correct storage place, and to tidy up after any activity. Teachers should lead by example, by keeping their own belongings tidy, and by providing a stimulating classroom environment. **Displays should be backed in either Hessian or brown paper** and have bright borders and a clear title. Displays should be changed regularly and should reflect a range of curriculum activities and skills.

### Adult led Learning

In EYFS, most learning is done through play, but there are times when an adult led activity is more appropriate to ensure we are delivering a broad and balanced curriculum. The amount of adult led activities and the length depends on the age of the children.

**Two- three Year Olds** – Two carpet adult led activity per session (morning or

afternoon), these should last 5-10 minutes. Optional adult led activity available in provision.

**Three – Four year olds** – Two carpet adult led activities per session, these should last 15 minutes each. One/Two adult led activities per week (10-15 minutes max)

**Four- Five Year olds** – Two adult led carpet activities per session, roughly 15-20 minutes each with the exception of RWI. Three focus tasks per week – maths, writing and topic. Independent 'Rainbow Challenges' are introduced during Autumn two and gradually increase in number throughout the year. These challenges are not adult led but have a specific, expected outcome and are designed to develop independent learning skills.

*\*sessions refer to either a morning or an afternoon. A full day contains two sessions*

## **Maths**

### **Reception:**

In the Reception, we follow the 'Maths no problem Foundations Scheme'. Maths is taught daily. Each maths session will start with a whole class carpet session with a problem focus. The carpet focus session will last approximately 20 minutes and then the children will engage in child initiated play. One group per day will take part in a differentiated adult led focus task with the class teacher and this will last 10-15 minutes per group.

### **Nursery 2:**

Maths is taught on a daily basis and also follows the early years Maths no problem approach. Maths will take place during carpet focus sessions and will last between 10 and 15 minutes depending on the children's listening and attention skills. Children may also take part in a maths adult led task which will be available throughout the week depending on the previous week's assessments/observations.

### **Two Year Olds:**

Early mathematical skills are taught primarily through play, using 'in the moment' teaching opportunities. Children will have access to a range of toys designed to promote mathematical concepts and will be introduced to a variety of number songs and stories. Maths is part of the day to day routines and staff will model mathematical language and counting daily.

In all EYFS classes, maths will also be taught in the moment during child initiated play. The classroom environments will provide many opportunities for the children to explore maths concepts through play. All adults will be aware of the children's next steps and will be challenging them to extend their learning through play. Staff will record any significant moments in the children's online learning journey and each child in Reception will also have a maths book.

### Read, Write Inc:

In EYFS we teach reading and writing skills using Read Write Inc. We start Read Write Inc sessions in Nursery but these are very short and focus primarily on verbal segmenting and blending skills in preparation for learning letter sounds. In reception, the children are assessed every half term and groups according to their needs. All staff follow the RWI lesson planning and have received RWI training and coaching.

In reception, children will complete an additional writing focus linked to their topic work. This is to develop the children's creative writing skills and to provide an opportunity for them to apply the skills learnt during RWI sessions.

### Observation, Assessment, Planning Cycle

In EYFS we regularly observe the children in their play. Sometimes we record these observations using an online Learning Journey, 'Tapestry'. Staff record 'significant moments' in a child's development and these observations enable staff to support them in making an overall assessment of a child's learning. Each term overall assessments are made using any evidence collected and practitioner knowledge of the children. Staff will make an overall judgement about whether a child is: 'On Track' (3), 'Working towards' (2) or 'At Risk'(1). Any children identified as being behind age related expectations will have further, in depth assessments of their learning and development and staff will plan ways to support these children in reaching age related expectations as quickly as possible. Overall assessments are then used to inform the medium term planning, interventions and weekly planning. Staff must provide a reason for adding an enhancement or planning a focus activity and assessments are often referenced in the why column of our planning grids.

Assessments are also made on a day to day basis and may or may not be recorded. For example, when observing a child in the creative area, a member of staff may notice that they are struggling to use scissors correctly. The staff member may create an observation of that child on Tapestry and make the relevant assessments linked to the observation, or they may simply share this knowledge with other staff who will all seek to support the child in developing their cutting skills over the coming weeks. If several children are observed as having difficulty in the same area, staff may agree to plan a focus activity in the following weeks to support learning in this area.

### **Next Steps Wall**

Each classroom has a Next Steps wall displayed. Every child has a section on the wall dedicated to celebrating their achievements. Staff will observe children in their play and then create a Next Step for that child. This next step will be specific, achievable and individual to each child. The child and the parents will be told when a next step has been set. Next steps on the next steps wall can link to any area of the EYFS curriculum or be a personal target. For example, A child may have been observed playing in the role play area but needed support in putting on a costume. The adult may then set a next step for that child to be able to put on a

costume independently. **Next steps for the wall must come from the children's play and not from adult led activities.** There is no timescale for these next steps being changed but they need to be achievable and realistic so any next steps that have not been met for a few weeks need to be reconsidered or changed to be more achievable. Once a child has achieved their next step, a large green tick will be placed on the wall and this achievement will be celebrated. **See Appendix 1 for a photo example and Key.**

### Planning in EYFS

In EYFS we create long and short term plans to ensure full curriculum coverage and a progression of skills and knowledge in EYFS and into KS1. Although we create plans, teachers must still remain flexible in their approach and adapt teaching and learning where necessary in response to the children's interests and assessments. For example, if a creative activity has been planned and set up but very few children engage with it, staff need to respond to this and change the activity to something more engaging for the children. They should not continue with an activity that is not supporting learning correctly.

#### **Long term Planning (Example Appendix 2):**

Each year the EYFS staff will agree on a series of topics or themes which will be covered during each term. By agreeing these topics we are ensuring the curriculum remains broad and balanced. Both Nursery and Reception will follow the same broad topics but will respond to the interests and learning of the children in their class within these topics. The long term planning document will detail which topics will be covered and what learning will take place for each area of the curriculum each half term. The Characteristics of Effective Learning will be colour coded throughout the long term plan, ensuring they are at the heart of all we do in EYFS. Our long term planning remains flexible. Staff may need to alter topics to match the children's interests from time to time but they will still ensure they have covered the knowledge and skills listed in the medium term plan. For example, collage activities may have been planned during an Autumn topic but the children are showing low levels of engagement. Staff may change the topic but collage skills will still be taught – the 'vehicle' for learning will change but the destination remains the same.

#### **Medium Term Planning (Example Appendix 3) :**

Following the assessments from the previous term, the Nursery staff and the reception staff will create their own medium term plans. These will include the learning they will cover during adult focus sessions and through enhancements to continuous provision. Nursery teachers are responsible for creating their MTP and the Reception teachers are responsible for creating theirs. Medium term plans are flexible and staff will always follow the needs and interests of the children.

#### **Weekly Adult focus planning (Example Appendix 4):**

Each week staff will create a plan detailing the adult led sessions taking place that week. This plan will include whole class/group carpet sessions and any adult led small group tasks taking place. Below are some examples of how the weekly plan should look for each year group.

### **Continuous Provision Planning (Example Appendix 5):**

Each week staff will plan how they will enhance the areas of continuous provision. These enhancements should be linked to previous assessments, children's interests or the current topic the children are learning about. Staff must always provide a valid reason for an enhancement being made. Enhancements should be made to indoor and outdoor areas of provision. Outdoor provision should provide an alternative learning experience (e.g. large scale activities/utilising nature as a learning tool).

### **Parents as Partners in Education**

In the EYFS parents are viewed as joint educators and their thoughts, opinions and contributions are valued and listened to. The main source of electronic communication with parents in the EYFS is via our online learning journey – Tapestry and ClassDojo. Parents are able to send messages, comment on and view observations and add their own contribution to the children's online learning journeys. Parents can also contribute to the children's learning by completing a 'Proud Cloud' for the child's Next Steps Wall. These proud clouds are to be added to the wall and celebrated in the same way we celebrate achievements in school. Parents are to be informed of their child's development and progress during parents evenings and on a day to day basis through conversations with staff. Staff provide workshops for parents throughout the year to enable them to support their child's learning at home. We also have regular stay and play sessions and invite parents to take part in our 'Wow events' at the end of each half term.