

**FEDERATION OF ST ANNE'S AND ST MARTIN'S CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

St Martin's



**Early Years and
Foundation Stage Policy**

**Approved: May 2024
Next review date: May 2026**

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Principles

The Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage states four guiding principles which should shape practice in the early years. These are:

- every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children can 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 practitioners and parents and /or carers; and
- children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities; (Statutory framework, March 2021) The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment underpin learning and development across all areas. Adults and the considered use of the environment support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

3. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) for 2023.

4. Structure of the EYFS

At St. Martin's our Early Years and Foundation Stage provision consists of a Reception Class of up to 30 children.

5. Learning and Development

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2023 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for

igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- *Communication and language: Children will learn to listen in a range of situations, including assemblies, whole class, small groups and one-to-one. We will teach them to give their full attention to what others are saying and to respond appropriately, confidently and with relevant comment. Children will learn to follow several-step instructions and participate in conversations answering and asking 'how' and 'why' questions. Finally, children will learn to express themselves confidently and appropriately. They will learn to talk about events in their lives and explain their ideas showing an awareness of the listener.*
- *Physical development: Children will learn to control their bodies, developing coordination and balance. Both large-scale and small-scale movements will receive focus, ensuring children are safe when negotiating spaces, climbing and using hand tools. Children will also be taught the importance of good health, physical exercise and a healthy diet.*
- *Personal, social and emotional development : Children will learn to play cooperatively and take turns with their peers independently and in a variety of different situations. They will learn to listen to children and adults around them and take into account their ideas, adapting the activity appropriately. Children will be shown how to form positive relationships with others and how to demonstrate sensitivity when interacting. We will encourage children to be confident to try new activities and speak in front of a familiar group, asking for help if and when required. Most importantly, we will teach the children how to be independent in all areas of school life, from managing simple routines to managing their own behaviour and resolving conflicts.*

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas. The prime areas are particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning as well as building children's capacity to learn, to form relationships and to thrive. It is important that these become the focus and run as a thread throughout the curriculum so the children are able to strengthen and apply them through the specific areas.

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

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are:

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

6. Learning and Teaching

The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework provides the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage.

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. They take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. This may include specialist and individualised plans and resources to meet the most complex of needs and, where necessary and appropriate, support from outside agencies. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. A range of enrichment opportunities and real life experiences are planned in order for engagement levels to be as high as possible

Long Term Planning : Contains key learning opportunities, such as key dates, festivals and trips. This plan will outline topics, the literacy spine and mathematical concepts.

Medium Term Planning: Links to the Development Matters Stages of Development to ensure curriculum coverage.

Short Term Planning: Is completed weekly. It includes learning objectives for all areas of the curriculum. Individuals and groups will also be planned for including SEND, PPG, EAL and any specific individual learning needs. Weekly planning is based on the previous week's learning to ensure gaps are filled and misconceptions addressed. Every member of staff in the classroom contributes to the weekly planning with annotations and observations.

Each day, children receive structured phonics sessions following a DfE recommended phonic scheme, and at St Martin's we use the resources from Little Wandle. For other subjects, there is a mixture of adult-led and child-initiated activities and children are given the opportunity to participate in planned and purposeful play. The themes and topics are those that the Early Years and Key Stage One teachers have identified as vehicles of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning and also to respond to the individual needs, achievements and interests of the children.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Lima 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 classroom is arranged so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. There is an enclosed outdoor area and access to the 'copse'. 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 the areas of learning.

At. Martin's, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement and interests. These observations are used to shape future planning.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

7. Positive Relationships

At St Martin's Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, independent learners from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

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:

- visiting children in Pre-school settings before they start our school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering the children the opportunity to come for a visit during the half term before starting school;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- inviting parents to regular meetings throughout the year 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 Foundation Stage;

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. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Teaching Assistants . We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

8. Intimate Care

We are keen that, wherever possible, children start school able to use the toilet independently and confidently. We fully accept however, that young children will have accidents from time to time. Our Intimate Care Policy details the ways in which we support our children if they need a change of clothing or other care following illness or a toileting incident. All children will be treated with respect and care. Staff members will verbally guide the child to clean themselves as far as possible. Support in changing into fresh clothing will be available, although if a child needs to be cleaned more thoroughly, parents will be asked to collect them from school. The class holds a log book where the type of incident, aftercare and the names of both the child and members of staff involved will be recorded. This document is confidential. We will always notify parents about intimate care given during the school day.

9. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

We determine ratios guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of the children within the group.

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee every 3 years.