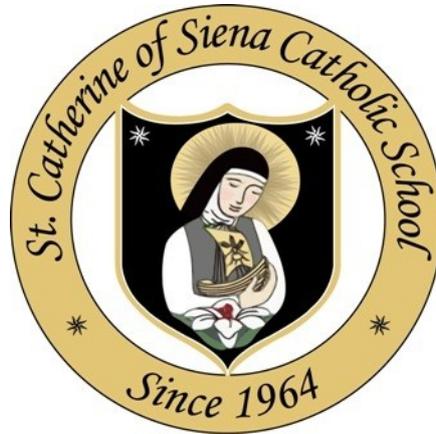




St. Catherine of Siena Primary School

**Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust
Company No 7944160**



St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Primary School

EYFS Policy

Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: July 2020
Last reviewed:	September 2019	
Next review due by:	July 2021	



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“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

*- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
2017*



1. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#). This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

2. Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all children join us, in one intake in September.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- the partnership between teachers and parents that helps our children to feel secure and safe at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in the provision offered to the children;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- having a balance of child and adult directed activities, that help children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;



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- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the EYFS.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with 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)

Unique Child

At St Catherine's we know that every child is different and develops in individual ways. We are passionate about developing all children to be resilient, confident and self-assured. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebrations, to help the children develop a positive attitude to learning. We know that children learn best when they are genuinely interested and engaged in their learning. Therefore, we make sure that our provision builds on and extends children's interests and develops their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities. Planning is flexible and shows how all the curriculum areas can be developed in response to the children's interests. Independence is an important aspect of our early years practice.

Our agreed expectations for developing children's independence are:

- We ensure our storage of resources enables the children to select and use the equipment independently during their play
- We encourage children to tidy up after themselves and to put things back where they belong
- We always ask children to 'have a go' at dressing themselves before an adult helps
- We develop the children's understanding of their own health and hygiene. For example, reminding them to wash their hands, knowing when they feel cold and independently selecting fruit and milk or water when they feel hungry or thirsty
- We give the children responsibility wherever possible



3. Curriculum

At St Catherine's, we follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage which is mandatory for all early years providers. This sets the standards that we meet to ensure that the children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. There are seven areas of learning and development that shape our educational programmes. All of the areas are important and inter-connected.

These are:

- *Communication and Language*

We give children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

- *Physical Development*

We provide opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children are helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

- *Personal, Social and Emotional Development*

We help children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

- *Literacy*

We encourage children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. We strive to provide a language rich environment, both indoors and outdoors.

- *Mathematics*

We provide children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.



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- *Understanding the World*

We guide children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

- *Expressive Arts and Design*

We enable children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

We consider the needs, interests and stage of development of each child and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences for the children in all of the areas of learning and development. Examples of our rich and stimulating learning experiences include cooking, going out on trips and inviting visitors into the school.

4. Positive Relationships

Role of adults

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. Our EYFS staff:

- visit each child in their home the week before they start school and talk to the parents about each child's interests, needs and development;
- make contact with children in their previous setting prior to their starting school;
- provide the children with the opportunity to spend time in school before starting;
- invite all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offer parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class;
- encourage parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent



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- discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- arrange a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents; Class assemblies, Sports Day etc;
- arrange half termly visits for parents to come into school and work with their child in the day to day school environment
- Keep parents and carers updated on what the children are learning through a range of medium, including a blog on our website, Twitter and updates on our Noticeboard.

At St Catherine of Siena we believe that all adults in the school make a significant contribution to the well-being and development of all children. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. They learn best when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. Adults in the Reception classes always ensure that they are sensitive and responsive to the needs, feelings and interests of all children. They encourage independence through warm and positive relationships.

- We seek to know and understand each individual child and their development
- We show enthusiasm and celebrate with children their interests and achievements
- We scaffold children's learning through talk, discussing strategies and ideas, suggesting possibilities and modelling approaches
- We encourage and support children to persevere through difficulties, to take risks, to ask questions and problem-solve
- We use the language of learning to focus children on themselves as learners
- We identify and support next steps in learning
- We join in play and child-initiated activities following children's agendas

Key Person

In each Reception class, there are at least two members of staff working as a close team who are the main key persons for the children in that class. This ensures there are good opportunities for children to experience consistent interactions and expectations. This helps children moving between the worlds of home and school where the environment and routine is very different. All key persons are responsible for keeping the children's observations and Learning Journeys up to date. At some points of the day other familiar adults take over the key person role for short periods of time. For example, at lunchtimes the midday supervisors support the children during their lunch and in the outdoor area.



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The role of the key person is:

- To help the child become familiar with the setting and provision within the setting*
- To offer a settled relationship for the child*
- To build relationships with the child's parents*
- To ensure the child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs*
- To engage and support parents in guiding their child's development at home*
- To have a deep knowledge and understanding of the child*
- To liaise regularly with the class teacher about their key children*
- To help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate*

Parental Involvement

At St Catherine of Siena we know that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education. We believe that children are eager learners and all adults have an important role in sustaining that eagerness. Parental involvement in education leads to better results for children in the early years and beyond.

We ensure that parents are fully involved in their child's education by:

- Gathering information from parents/carers before a child starts*
- Providing Stay and Play sessions every half term*
- Ensuring photographic evidence/children's work is displayed around the setting and on Twitter for parents to see*
- Giving parents/carers the opportunity to take part in educational visits and share their interests and expertise*
- Talking to parents about their child before and after school and maintaining an open door policy*
- Sharing children's 'Learning Journeys' regularly with parents and valuing the ongoing contributions to this from parents/carers*
- Offering parents/carers the opportunity to record their child's response to experiences and to share achievements*
- Delivering workshops to share our practice, ethos and ideas with parents/carers*



5. Enabling Environments

At St Catherine of Siena we believe that a rich environment has an immediate effect on the quality of children's learning and development. An enabling environment is one that is comfortable, interesting, attractive and appropriate for the children who use it. It encourages children to play and learn because they feel secure. When children feel emotionally safe they are able to explore and find out about the world around them. The outdoor and indoor spaces are seen as one, with activities flowing freely. This free flow between the inside and the outside has a positive impact on the children's development. There are areas where children can be active, be quiet, be creative, imaginative and much more. We ensure that both the indoor and outdoor areas contain print (such as displays, books, labels and questions) so that children begin to understand that print conveys meaning and they develop those important early literacy skills.

Indoors

Indoor spaces are carefully planned so they accommodate children's interests and needs. The spaces are used flexibly and a range of activities are provided and pictures ensuring easy access for all the children to enable their play. The learning environment covers all areas of learning and particularly reflects current learning.

Outdoors

We know that being outdoors has a positive impact on children's sense of wellbeing and helps all children's development. Therefore at St Catherine's we ensure that all children have constant access to the outdoors unless it is unsafe to do so. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales. It supports confidence and allows opportunities for big scale play, problem solving, creativity and risk taking. In addition, it gives children first hand experiences with weather, seasons and the natural world. The outdoor environment provides children with the freedom to explore, use their senses and to be physically active. Many children prefer being outdoors so the learning opportunities that are available indoors are available for the children outdoors, for example, key vocabulary, writing, mathematics, role play and much more. Planning for the outdoors is of equal importance to the planning for indoors and the outdoor area is organised into learning areas where adults can follow children's interests, respond to their ideas for developing play activities or provide a specific focus. Children also have access to our Forest School initiative, providing them with further outdoor learning opportunities.



Celebrating Children's Learning Around the Setting

There is no greater accolade for a child than to see his or her work around the school. At St Catherine's we aim to immerse the setting with children's learning and achievements through the use of photographs, vocabulary, mark making/writing, book making, drawings and paintings. All children's work is valued and displayed in the setting.

5. Learning and Development

At St Catherine of Siena we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

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;*
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;*
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;*
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;*
- 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 shared with parents;*
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;*



6. Planning and Assessment

At St Catherine's we believe that the quality of planning is integral to the quality of teaching and the impact on learning. When planning we are continuously striving to ensure that the needs and interests of all pupils are being met and that learning opportunities are engaging, interesting and meaningful. All planning is used flexibly and as a guide in order to also follow the children's interests and foster their curiosity as well as providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

At St Catherine of Siena we use observations as the basis for our planning. We observe children to identify and recognise their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. Our observations then feed into our future planning as we know that this fostering of children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning. When children arrive we take a baseline assessment within the first few weeks using the Development Matters statements. This ensures that we are aware of children

who may be vulnerable to low achievement and put into place interventions for them to achieve well. Also, this allows us to measure the progress of each and every child. Each term we make a summative judgement about each child linked to Development Matters and we then use this data in order to raise standards. At St Catherine's all children in the Foundation Stage have a Learning Journal. This documents their progress throughout their time in our Foundation Stage. It includes formal and informal observations, photographs, children's work and parental contributions.

7. Procedures for review and evaluation

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and SLT will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.



Appendix 1: List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

<i>Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS</i>	<i>Where can it be found?</i>
<i>Safeguarding policy and procedures</i>	<i>See child protection and safeguarding policy</i>
<i>Procedure for responding to illness</i>	<i>See health and safety policy</i>
<i>Administering medicines policy</i>	<i>See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy</i>
<i>Emergency evacuation procedure</i>	<i>See health and safety policy</i>
<i>Procedure for checking the identity of visitors</i>	<i>See child protection and safeguarding policy</i>
<i>Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children</i>	<i>See child protection and safeguarding policy</i>
<i>Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints</i>	<i>See complaints policy</i>