



ST MARY'S SCHOOL GERRARD'S CROSS

EARLY YEARS POLICIES 1

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The Nature of Learning

The three 'prime' areas:

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

The four 'specific' areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

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

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This Early Years Policy forms part of a suite of documents and policies which relate to the statutory requirements of the school towards pupils aged from three years to the academic year in which they become five.

In particular this policy is linked to the following policies: **Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Safer Recruitment***, **Sex and Relationships Education***, **Pastoral Care, Pupil Confidentiality***, **Behaviour and Sanctions as well as the policies relating to the safe use of mobile devices***, **Taking and Storing Images, Curriculum, Assessment Tracking and Recording, Performance Management, EAL, Complaints, Missing Child, Forest School.** There is also relevant information in the **Staff AUP***. Policies marked with an * are available on request from the School Office, all other policies are on the website. Copies of the Code of conduct for all staff are available on request from the school office.

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy reflects the values and philosophy of the Early Years staff in relation to the teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage. It gives a framework and guidance within which all staff work.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Curriculum for the Foundation Stage should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

Communication and language – Children will be given lots of opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical development – Children will be provided lots of opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children will be taught the importance of physical activity and make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, social and emotional development – We will help children develop a positive sense of themselves and others. They will learn to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings and understand appropriate behaviour. Children are taught mindfulness techniques and our PSHE scheme also help to develop these skills. We want children to become confident in their own abilities. We will also promote fundamental British values.

Literacy – Children will be taught to link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest. They will be introduced to a range of writing styles and will also be given opportunities to develop handwriting skills.

Mathematics – Children will have lots of opportunities to develop and improve their skills of counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating addition and subtraction problems. They will be taught to describe shapes, spaces and measures.

Understanding the world – Children will be guided 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. A range of school trips and activities will enable the children to experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live.

Expressive arts and design – Children will explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. We will give them the opportunities and encouragement to share their thoughts,

ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

3. QUALITY OF TEACHING

Excellent teaching will occur when:

- Play is recognised as an important tool for children to develop and reflect on their learning
- There are plenty of opportunities for the children to talk about themselves and the world around them
- They engage in first-hand experiences
- Learning is well planned and the needs of the individual/group are the starting point.
- Children have access to a variety of indoor and outdoor activities
- Resources are accessible to all pupils
- Special needs are identified as soon as possible and the appropriate measures taken to support the child's learning
- Partnership with parents and carers is positively addressed and is recognised as being vital to the development of the child.
- The child's home background and language is valued.

4. QUALITY OF LEARNING

Excellent learning will occur when:

- Children are motivated and instructions are clear
- Children are enabled to access materials independently and return them independently
- Children have a pride in their work and have high expectations
- They are encouraged to reflect on and evaluate their work and that of their peers
- This evaluation is used to raise the standard of their work
- Everyone is involved in the child's development (parents/carers/adults/etc)
- The materials are appropriate to the needs of the child and the learning experience
- Transition between Early Years and Year 1 is smooth

5. ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The daily routine involves carpet time, small and large group activities and tidy up time. The children make choices about their activities and recognise that learning is a social interactive process between child, adult, materials and environment. There is a balance of adult-led, adult initiated and child initiated activities, delivered though indoor and outdoor play.

Activity time

The adult's role during this time is to observe how children gather information, interact with peers, and solve problems, to enter into the children's activities, extend and set up problem solving activities.

The children are encouraged to put away materials independently.

The children are given the opportunity to evaluate and recall their work in a variety of ways:

- Recall and recount problems encountered
- Draw pictures or show models
- Describe the activities undertaken simply, e.g. in a sentence

Carpet time/Circle time

This will take place every day for all children. Adults will spend time playing games, singing songs, finger rhymes, reading /telling stories, talking about special events etc.

Small group time (adult-initiated)

This will take into account the needs, interests and abilities of the children.

Adults will:

- Extend the children's ideas
- Ask open-ended questions
- Set up additional problem solving activities
- Introduce new materials
- Help children practise new skills

This small group time will incorporate Literacy/Numeracy work and will be planned according to the needs of the group of children.

6. THE EARLY YEARS CURRICULUM

The Nature of Learning

Children learn through play. Play is a child's work and provides vital foundations for future learning. Play is the medium through which the Early Years curriculum is experienced by children. It is a very serious business since it demands from the children concentration, perseverance and mental and physical effort.

Young children learn by experience. They need to look, touch, smell, listen, taste and explore with a variety of play materials.

Within the group, all children are supported in developing their potential at their own pace. By means of developmentally appropriate activities and adult support, the curriculum leads to the achievement of the Early Learning goals and prepares children to progress with confidence towards the National Curriculum.

The Early Years Curriculum is an active learning programme, which recognises that learning is a social interactive process between the child, adults, materials and the environment.

The programme emphasises:

- Positive adult child interaction
- A child-friendly learning environment in which children are free to pursue and develop their ideas and share their discoveries with others
- A consistent daily routine

- Team-based child assessment

Key elements of this approach include a supportive climate in which control is shared between children and adults, a focus on children's strengths, i.e. what they can do, and know and a problem-solving approach both to work and dealing with social conflict. Throughout the day adults are able to focus on the unexpected and spontaneous and to look for opportunities to help children clarify their understanding and extend their thinking, for example, by offering additional materials which might help children broaden their goals.

The process of education is as important as the content of the curriculum, i.e. when the children are actively engaged in first hand experiences and are able to observe, explore and take risks, they are learning how to learn and are developing self-esteem and independence.

Personal, Socials and Emotional Development

We see this as an area of paramount importance. Within a secure and stimulating environment children are supported in developing self-esteem and the confidence to work, co-operate and establish relationships with others in a group outside the family.

The children are encouraged to:

- Make and express choices
- Demonstrate independence in selecting activities and resources
- Explore new learning
- Take control and responsibility for their actions and needs
- Use initiative and their developing powers of reasoning to solve the problems they encounter in their work
- Develop the perseverance to engage in increasingly complex play, working sometimes independently and at other times collaboratively with increasing concentration

The same problem-solving approach applies to areas of social conflict where children are supported in verbalising their feelings, acknowledging and respecting the needs of others and working towards mutually acceptable solutions so that they develop an understanding of both self, and the part they play in a group, and of what is right and wrong and why.

Adult example and support, activities, stories and the sharing of experiences help to develop an understanding of a range of feelings and care for all living things, property and the environment.

The children are introduced to concepts of: sharing, caring, honesty, relationships, kindness, feeling and empathy within the broadly Christian religious traditions. We are also very keen to respect and celebrate religious festivals from other beliefs.

Communication and Language / Literacy

- **Speaking and Listening**

Children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary, fluency and listening skills by hearing, participating in, having fun with and responding to stories, songs and rhymes, some of which they will commit to memory.

Children talk with others about personally meaningful experiences. They plan their work, communicate with others during work time and describe events, objects and relationships and evaluate their work.

Adult-initiated activities in small and large groups familiarise children with the pattern, rhythm of language and introduce them to early work on letter and sound recognition. Through role-play the children develop language skills by using different modes and styles of speaking for different people and situations. They need to listen to each other's contributions and learn to play co-operatively.

- **Mark-making**

In an environment rich in print and opportunities to write, our goal is to help children to understand the power of the written word as a basis for communication, knowledge acquisition and entertainment and, when they are ready, to encourage children to use written and drawn symbols for themselves in drawing, letter-like forms, invented spellings, dictated stories and emergent writing.

A variety of mark-making implements for drawing and writing are offered to the children and they are encouraged to draw and write about things which interest them and which they want to communicate. Mark-making is a very important and necessary stage in the development of early literacy. Emergent writing is positively encouraged so that children learn to communicate in the written form. Every child's work is valued and respected. The children are encouraged to use mark-making tools in all areas of the room, such as shopping lists, telephone pads, letters and notes.

We encourage and help each child to transfer her spoken language into the written form. The level of writing is matched to each child's ability. This also includes scribing for the children to enable them to compose at length.

As the children gain in competence, their random marks become more precise, left to right orientation becomes apparent and their writing begins to contain recognisable letters. Children who are beginning to write independently are supported in their attempts by helping them to discriminate the initial letter sound of the word required. As competence increases, they are encouraged to discriminate and represent further sounds in these words.

Children whose fine motor skills need developing, are encouraged to use fat crayons, paints, clay, dough and small manipulative toys to develop finer muscle tone in their fingers.

Writing is practised in the air, on paper, in sand, with paints, on white boards and is developed indoors and outdoors.

Reading

We encourage our children to love and respect books. Every day, a member of staff will share books with the whole class and at other times with individuals or small groups as required. We aim to share: fairy stories, poetry, factual books and picture books with the children. From Nursery children are given books to take home to discuss and 'read' with their parents. They will then be introduced schemes such as Jelly and Bean books, Ruth Miskin, Sound Start and Oxford Reading Tree.

We help the children to develop pre-reading skills by touching each word as it is read, enabling the children to match the spoken to the written word and to follow print in the correct direction. The children are encouraged to use pictures clues and to predict events. We discuss the content of the books to ensure understanding. Recorded stories are available for the children to listen. All these activities help the children to discover the relationship between the spoken and the written word. They discover words and pictures have meaning and discover rhymes, rhythms and patterns of words.

There are many games and puzzles provided which enable the children to develop visual discrimination and matching skills necessary for learning to read. We provide a fully literate environment in our Early Years and the children are exposed to many signs, labels and captions around the room. Through daily Phonics teaching, the children are taught the 44 main sounds in English.

In the Michaelmas Term, parents are invited to participate in a phonics session so that they can support their children with reading and learning key words.

Mathematics

Mathematics enters every area of the Early Years and the development of mathematical concepts is happening all the time. Through their play and by means of adult-supported practical experiences children become familiar with sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing, recognising and creating patterns and counting everyday objects.

Elements of the daily routine such as preparing snacks, counting those present, number games, songs, rhymes and number-related activities such as jigsaw puzzles help children recognise and use numbers to 10 (and beyond, where appropriate).

Children use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems and their developing mathematical vocabulary to describe shape, position, size and quantity, simple addition and subtraction, doubling, halving and sharing. Early mathematical concepts are developed such as sorting, matching, colour, shape, size and number.

Understanding the World

A safe and stimulating environment allows children to explore and experiment with a wide range of natural and manufactured materials. They learn to observe, talk and ask questions and sometimes record features of objects and substances and to recognise differences, patterns, similarities and change.

Children are assisted both indoors and outdoors in exploring and understanding their environment, their families and past and present events in their own lives. They explore, care for and recognise features of living things, e.g. in the garden and with visiting animals.

The children explore a range of materials. They are involved in planning and decision-making, cutting, placing, fixing and fastening. Language skills are developed as children talk about what they have made. At times they are asked to make something to meet given criteria. They have the opportunity to explore a full range of materials and to select the most appropriate materials and make their desired model. They are encouraged to test their work and amend and improve as appropriate.

Girls will have opportunities to go to the Prep ICT Suite and in addition the classroom has a computer, laptops and an interactive whiteboard. There is a range of programmes to enable the children to develop hand/eye co-ordination leading to fundamental keyboards skills. Our programmes allow the children to draw and paint pictures and engage in early reading and numeracy activities. The pupils have opportunities to develop early computational thinking skills through activities such as programming Beebot, sequencing activities etc.

The girls have food technology sessions. We aim to give the children the experience of as many techniques concerned with the safe preparation of food as possible, such as stirring, chopping, grating, mixing, rolling and squeezing. Everyone has the opportunity to smell, feel, taste the foods and observe the scientific changes when foods are: beaten, frozen, baked and mixed together.

Physical Development

A range of large and small equipment and opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, allow children to develop confidence and enjoyment in the use and development of their own physical skills. Adult support enables children safely to meet physical challenges, developing increasing skill, co-ordination and control in moving, climbing and balancing. At the same time, children are supported in the development of the fine motor skills required to use tools such as brushes, pencils and scissors, to handle small objects with increasing control and precision and to choose the correct tool for the job. Children explore a variety of manipulative toys, which develop manual dexterity by slotting, pushing, pressing and threading.

Expressive Arts and Design

Children are encouraged to use their senses and a wide range of resources in order to express their own ideas and feelings and to construct their individual responses in two and three dimensions.

Art equipment, including paints, glue, crayons, and pencils as well as natural and discarded resources provide for open-ended exploration of colour, shape and texture and the development of skills in painting, drawing and collage. Children join in with and respond to music, dance and stories and there are many opportunities for imaginative role-play, both individually and as part of the group. All children have two music sessions with a specialist teacher per week.

7. RESOURCES

The children will have the opportunity to select from the following areas:

- Quiet / book
- Outdoor
- Construction play
- Creative play
- Writing/mark making
- Painting
- Table toys/small world
- Computer
- Maths
- Science/investigation
- Role play

In addition

- Food technology sessions
- Regular PE sessions in the school hall

8. PLANNING, RECORDING AND ASSESSMENT

Planning

All staff are committed to planning as a team around the needs and interests of the children.

- **Long Term Plans**

Long term planning provides a strong framework for working with 3-5 year olds.

We base our plans on the Foundation Stage curriculum. This is the over-arching framework that informs all others stages of planning. It shows the range of experiences/learning opportunities that are available whilst the children are in the foundation stage.

- **Medium Term Plans**

Planning takes place half-termly and is evaluated weekly. The topics are planned carefully to ensure continuity and progression throughout the Foundation Stage.

- **Short Term Plans**

Daily planning ensures that activities/learning objectives meet the needs and interests of the children.

Recording and Assessment

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals through regular observations, formative and summative assessments **and recorded using Tapestry**. Base line assessments are also carried out within the first six weeks of the new academic year to inform planning and target setting for each individual child in EYFS. **They are repeated at the end of the year in order to assess progress.**

Methods of Observation

- Daily observational jottings noting children's significant achievements.
- Planned focused observations and analysis.
- Photographic evidence – dated (see also St Mary's School policy on Taking and Storing Images)
- Physical evidence e.g. Tapestry/Workbooks

An entry assessment is undertaken before pupils are offered a place in our Early Years unit. **Each child in Early Years has an electronic 'Learning Journal' (Tapestry)** which contains a collection of different documents collected by Early Years practitioners that provide a picture of a child's development under the areas of learning identified in the EYFS. They consist of photos (see also Taking and Storing Images policy), art-work, mark-making, notes of relevant conversations or comments made by the child. The aim is to build a unique picture of what each child knows, feels and can do as well as her particular interests and learning style. This picture can then be used to pinpoint learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences. **Parents are actively encouraged to contribute to their child's 'Learning Journal'.**

The EYFS profile is completed for all children in the final term of the year in which they reach age five, no later than 30 June in that term. Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The results of the EYFS profile is shared with parents. The Early Years teacher meets with the Year 1 teacher to pass on the profile and summarise each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning.

9. BEHAVIOUR

Our aim is that all children will flourish in a secure environment in which expectations are clear and children are free to develop without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone. Children will be supported and encouraged by adults to verbalise their feelings and to adopt

a problem-solving approach to dealing with social conflict in order to develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

To achieve this:

- Policies governing the conduct and safety of the group will be explained to all newcomers by the Head of the Prep Department and the Pre-Prep Coordinator
- Staff will provide a consistent, positive role model and will endorse desirable behaviour
- Staff will establish clear expectations and boundaries for appropriate behaviour, appropriate to the children's level of understanding. This is achieved by modelling of appropriate behaviour in different contexts, praise specifically related to positive behaviour, and rewards such as merit certificates and Star of the Week.
- Activities and routines will encourage sharing, negotiation and co-operation. Positive behaviour is also encouraged through learning activities such as role play, puppets, stories and circle time.
- We encourage responsibility in caring for others and the environment with activities such as helping with tidying and setting out snacks or equipment.
- Staff will help the children to understand the consequences and effects of their behaviour on others.
- Any behavioural problems will be handled at the earliest opportunity in a developmentally appropriate fashion, respecting individual children's level of understanding and maturity and acknowledging that some kinds of behaviour may arise from a child's special needs
- Staff will demonstrate that the child is valued even in the case of misbehaviour and it is made clear that it is the behaviour which is unwelcome, not the child.
- Significant incidents relating to misbehaviour are recorded by the Early Years Teacher.
- The EYFS teacher will seek information from parents/carers and discuss with them behaviour issues, strategies and actions to promote positive behaviour, as concerns arise.
- Recurring problems are tackled by all staff in partnership with the parents to establish an understanding of the cause. With parental advice, we will seek advice as necessary from other agencies, particularly the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust Early Years Service.
- Corporal punishment will never be used or threatened at St Mary's School
- We will only use physical restraint, such as holding, when it is clear a child is at risk of serious harm to themselves or others and/or there is a risk of serious damage to property (see also St Mary's School policy on Use of Physical Restraint).
- If a child's behaviour is persistently challenging and presents a significant and consistent risk to themselves or others, we may discuss with parents/carers the possibility of keeping the child at home for a short period. This will allow time for staff and parents/carers to make reasonable adjustments to manage the child's behaviour

in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act. We will consult the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust Early Years Service before taking this action.??? We will consider fully the views of the parents/carers and child on developing approaches and strategies to manage the child's behaviour and plan for the child's return to our setting.

Achieving Positive Behaviour

At St Marys School the named person for coordinating a positive approach to behaviour in EYFS is the Head of Prep Department and the Pre-Prep Coordinator.

The role of our coordinators is to:

- Keep up-to-date with legislation, research and guidance on promoting positive behaviour.
- Identify and access relevant sources of expertise and training on promoting positive behaviour to ensure a consistent response in the promotion of positive behaviour
- To keep a record of staff attendance at training.
- Ensure all staff, volunteers, students and parents are familiar with the settings behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.

The responsibility of all staff, volunteers, students and parents is to:

- Recognise that social interactions vary between cultures and families and acknowledge and respect each child's individual background.
- Provide a positive model of behaviour by treating one another with respect, care and courtesy at all times.
- Record and report all injuries and accidents appropriately.

10. PARENT AND COMMUNITY LINKS

Our aim is for parents to be partners in their children's learning and to be fully informed of their children's progress. We encourage parents to see us at the beginning/end of a session with any queries or immediate needs. Parent consultation meetings are held in the first half of Michaelmas term and at the end of the Lent term. Formal written reports are provided at the end of Trinity term. In addition, parents are invited to Pre-Prep teas/breakfasts throughout the year when they can view their children's work. They can also track progress via the online profiling tool Tapestry.

All parents/carers are actively encouraged to visit the Early Years class and are also invited to attend school events.

11. STAFF AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Early Years staff will attend appropriate courses/information evenings to extend knowledge, skills and expertise and in order to keep up to date and abreast of educational developments. The information is then shared with members of the team and, where

appropriate, fed back to the whole school staff. Individual members of EYFS staff have regular supervision meetings with the Head of the Prep Department to support their role as key persons working with children and their families. A member of staff with a current paediatric First Aid certificate will always be on the premises when children are present and will accompany the children on outings.

12. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS

The school's purpose is to deliver a well-planned, balanced and appropriate curriculum to meet the needs of the community we serve. We have high expectations of all our children and provide them with quality learning experiences covering all aspects of the curriculum. These are irrespective of race, gender, class or disability. The school's ethos supports the development of cultural and personal identities and prepares our children for full participation in society.

Every child needs to achieve success in order to develop a positive self-image. We recognise that all our children, including those with special educational needs, require a differentiated approach in order for them to have access to the whole curriculum and therefore reach their potential.

It is the responsibility of our SENCO, the Learning Support Assistant, and all members of staff to ensure that teaching strategies, resources and support are appropriate to the needs of each individual. The school policy is to provide special needs support earlier rather than later. This means staff are aware of the importance of any special needs as the result of early assessment.

13. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Pre-Prep Coordinator will be responsible for overseeing the delivery of an appropriate curriculum and the evaluation of its success. This information will be shared with Early Years/Pre-Prep staff at regular meetings and will be used to support future planning and development initiatives.

The Early Years staff are responsible for the day to day running of the unit.

The Head of the Prep Department and Director of Studies have overall responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

Reviewed: September 2019



ST MARY'S SCHOOL GERRARD'S CROSS

EARLY YEARS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 2

- A. Late child collection/non-collection (Prep Department)
- B. Lost child
- C. Outdoor Play
- D. Contenance
- E. Equality
- F. Settling in
- G. Early Years Outings
- H. Mobile phone policy

A. LATE CHILD COLLECTION/NON COLLECTION POLICY (Prep Department)

The welfare and safety of the children is always at the forefront of our minds.

If a parent or guardian is unavoidably delayed, they should contact the school office as soon as possible and the child(ren) will be asked to wait with the class teacher.

If the parent/guardian is unable to contact the school office, the child will not be allowed to leave. EYFS staff will inform the Head of Department who will try to contact the parent to make alternative arrangements. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the emergency contact will be phoned.

An agreed password will need to be given by any person authorised by a parent to collect their child who is not known to the school staff. A member of staff will wait with the child until they arrive.

Under no circumstances should any child go home with anyone else unless prior arrangements have been made.

Should a child not be collected and the parent/guardian is not contactable, police and/or social services will be contacted and the Senior Leadership Team should be informed.

B. MISSING CHILD POLICY

Every care is taken to ensure that our children are accounted for at all times. However, the unlikely event that it is suspected that a child has gone missing, an immediate roll call will be taken by the senior person in charge at the time. If it is discovered that a child is unaccounted for, then a full search of the accommodation and its immediate surrounds will take place, ensuring that the remaining children are supervised and secure. CCTV may also

be used to check the school grounds. At this point the Headmistress, Head of Prep Department and SLT must be informed. If after a thorough search (no more than 15-20 minutes), it proves impossible to locate the child, the emergency services and the parent/guardian are to be contacted.

On the arrival of the emergency services, the senior person in charge at the time is responsible for apprising them of all the information in respect of the missing child and what action has been taken.

When the situation has been resolved, relevant members of staff, including the Senior Leadership Team, should review the reasons for it happening and ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to prevent it from happening again. The Health and Safety committee should be informed and a site assessment should be carried out where necessary.

C. OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY

Outdoor play is essential for all aspects of a child's development. It can provide children with experiences which enable them to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically. In doing so it provides a rich context for the development of their language and encourages positive attitudes towards a healthy lifestyle. It is the policy of the Early Years that outdoor play is an integral part of our provision available to those children who wish to access it. In Early Years when children are involved in self-chosen activities, they move freely between indoor and outdoor areas using the resources which best meet their needs. We believe that outdoor play is equally as important as indoor play and in fact some children learn best when in the outdoor environment. In addition, staff fully trained in Forest School lead regular activities for children in Early Years.

The aim of both indoor and outdoor play is to provide a stimulating environment for children's learning in all areas of the Early Years Curriculum. Close observation is essential in order to assess children's ability and to ensure appropriate planning and continuity for the outdoor curriculum.

The provision and planning for outdoor play, just as indoor play, must reflect the diversity and richness of the experience and developing interests of the children.

The Outdoor Area

The outdoor area consists of a wide open space, a woodland learning area and a covered area which provides for:

- challenging and exciting play - grassed and hard areas (including straight and winding paths) are wide enough for safe, easy play with a safety surface area for climbing equipment
- shady areas

- growing/digging areas provide opportunities for finding mini-beasts, planting, sowing seeds and harvesting, providing opportunities for environmental science, caring and responsibility
- wild areas - plants, wild flowers and trees, logs and shrubs to attract insects
- a sand and water tray
- quiet, reflective areas and busy, moving play areas developing exploration and imagination
- opportunities for large scale experiences

Outdoor Play

When planning outdoor play, we consider the following points:

- the specific purpose of the outdoor play
- individual, co-operative and parallel play
- skills, knowledge, concepts and attitudes to be acquired/developed by the children
- appropriate use of resources
- staff interaction, guidance and support
- balance/breadth of curriculum provision
- alteration, addition or removal of resources
- quality play

To ensure balance and breadth of provision, we will have clear goals for children's learning, at the same time being responsive to children's interests. Within the planning there should be flexibility to meet individual children's needs as they arise during the session.

Resources should be available to enhance and extend their play. Staff will make notes of children's achievements (through observation and photographs) recording these on individual assessment sheets and or on Tapestry. (see also St Mary's policy on Taking and Storing Images).

The Role of the Adult Outdoors

There should be a balance of child-initiated play, adult-initiated and adult-led activities.

Adults should be actively involved with children in their games and activities where appropriate and should not be solely in a supervisory role.

Adults should be:

- talking with children in a variety of ways (conversing, discussing, questioning, modelling and commentating)
- helping children to find solutions to problems
- supporting, encouraging
- extending their activities by making extra resources available and providing new ideas
- initiating games and activities
- joining in games and activities when invited by children
- observing, assessing and recording

- being aware of safety issues
- being aware of every child's equal right of access to a full outdoor curriculum which is broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated regardless of race, culture, religion, gender or disability
- evaluating observations in order to plan appropriate resources and experiences

In these ways adults make positive contributions to the children's play and set up challenging situations for children to experience.

Safety Outdoors

When setting out the equipment each day and during sessions, staff must be safety conscious.

Staff on duty outdoors must always be aware of the safety of the children in their care, be vigilant at all times and never leave the outdoor area for any reason unless another member of staff has taken over responsibility. Children should be discouraged from behaviours such as using sticks as weapons or becoming involved in chasing games and aimless play. It is most important for staff to move around the outdoor areas constantly so that all areas are adequately supervised.

At the end of the session the outdoor areas should be scanned carefully in case children are left outside unsupervised. All equipment should be stored away sensibly and carefully, to allow for safe and easy removal next day.

If a child is injured, in the first instance she should be referred to a Paediatric First Aider. If Paediatric First Aider is unavailable or further treatment is required, she should be taken to the School Nurse. Details of the accident must be written up as soon as possible in the first aid book. The child's parent must be informed of the accident and treatment.

Climbing apparatus should be set out on the grassed and safety surface areas whenever possible. If the hard areas are used, safety mats should cover the surrounding area. Children's clothing should be monitored carefully e.g. unfastened shoelaces and buckles, scarves and ties on anoraks which are too long can easily cause accidents, particularly on wheeled toys.

Children will be encouraged to look before they jump off apparatus; children will also be encouraged to leave space between themselves and the child in front when crossing planks or climbing up/down apparatus.

Whenever children carry equipment they should be taught how to do it and adults should be aware of the risks involved and minimise them to ensure safety.

D. CONTINENCE POLICY

Rationale

At St Marys School we believe that it is wrong to discriminate against any learner. We strive to meet the needs of children with delayed personal development in the same way that we

meet the needs of children with any other form of delayed development. We believe children should not be excluded from any activity solely because of incontinence and that every child's needs should be considered on an individual basis.

Health and Safety

Statement of procedures to be followed for nappy changing:

- Staff to wear disposable gloves while dealing with the incident
- Soiled nappies to be double wrapped and placed in outside bin
- Changing area to be cleaned after use with an appropriate anti-bacterial cleaning agent
- Hot water and liquid soap available to wash hands as soon as the task is completed
- Paper towels available for drying hands

Parents must ensure that until they are continent, children wear nappies or protective underwear in order to prevent urine and/or faecal contamination of the school furnishings etc. Otherwise, this could be a source of infection for other children and staff.

Facilities

At St Mary's School, children will be changed in a private area on a changing mat. A "Do Not Enter" sign will be placed on the door to ensure that privacy and dignity can be maintained.

Child Protection

There are no regulations to indicate that a second member of staff must be available to supervise the nappy changing process to ensure that abuse does not take place. School managers are required to remain highly vigilant for any signs or symptom of improper practice, as they do for all activities carried out on site.

To ensure that staff follow correct procedures and are not worried about false accusations of abuse, the following guidelines will be followed:

- Nappy changing will take place on a changing mat in a private area
- The normal child protection policy will be applied if a member of staff notices marks or injuries
- In case of the child becoming unduly distressed, parents will be contacted

Partnership Working

Where necessary a planned programme of care will be worked out in partnership with:

- The child's parents
- Any relevant health care professionals

This will include the parents:

- agreeing to ensure that the child is changed at the latest possible time before being brought to the school
- providing the school with spare nappies, nappy sacks, barrier cream and changes of clothing

- understanding and agreeing the procedures that will be followed when their child is changed in school – including the use of any cleanser or application of any cream
- agreeing to inform the school should the child have any marks/rash
- agreeing to a “minimum change” policy i.e. the school would not undertake to change the child more frequently than if she were at home
- agreeing to collect the child from the school should they show symptoms of diarrhoea or similar indications of ill health
- agreeing to review arrangements should this be necessary

This will include the School:

- Agreeing to change the child should they soil themselves or become uncomfortably wet
- Agreeing how often the child would be changed should the child be staying for the full day

E. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At St Mary’s School we recognise that inclusion is not optional; all children have the right to care and an education that meets their individual needs and interests and promotes their learning and development.

We will ensure that St Mary’s is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children, particularly those that arise from children’s ethnic heritage, gender and those who are disabled or have special educational needs provided we can cater for those needs (as stated in our SEND policy). Our setting is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and to valuing diversity for all children and families. We recognise that inclusive practice and meeting individual children’s needs lies at the heart of the EYFS, therefore we aim to:

- provide a secure and accessible environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are considered and valued
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity
- make inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities in our setting

Valuing diversity and promoting equality

Admissions (See Admissions Policy)

We welcome and value all members of our community. This is supported by our inclusive admissions policy and as such we aim to:

- provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form
- ensure that all our policies are as accessible as possible to all parents, carers and members of our community
- not discriminate against any child or their family and actively seek to reduce prejudice, stereotyping and racial intolerance.

Employment (See Safer Recruitment Policy)

- ensure posts are advertised internally and externally and that all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria.
- ensure that no job application or employee will receive less fair treatment on the grounds of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability.
- appoint the applicant who best meets the specified criteria for the job, subject to references and an enhanced DBS check.
- ensure that all job advertisements include a commitment to promoting equality and recognising and respecting diversity as part of their specifications.

Training

- We seek out regular training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable all individuals an equal opportunity to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices.

Our Learning Environment

We aim to create an enabling learning environment which is as accessible as possible for every individual who uses our setting and premises.

We endeavour to do this by:

- differentiating provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunities to develop their skills and abilities
- positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of our resources; e.g. books, puppets, and role play artefacts which reflect a diverse range of religions, cultures, abilities and disabilities within society.
- avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of books or other visual materials to promote non-stereotyped roles e.g. female plumber, male nurse
- celebrating a wide range of festivals including Diwali, Chinese New Year, Christmas
- ensuring that children's home languages, particularly when other than English, are valued and where possible, used to support children's learning and development within our setting.
- regularly seeking the views and feelings of parents - consultations and questionnaires.

Valuing diversity

- We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and home cultures.

- We encourage parents and carers to take part in the life of the setting and to contribute fully. Where possible, we invite parents to come and share their cultures.
- We will not tolerate threatening or abusive behaviour towards or between staff and families and all such incidents will be challenged and recorded and, where necessary, relevant outside agencies will be involved.

Food

- We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met. For example, if a child has egg allergies – we check daily with the catering staff.
- We help children to learn about a range of food.
- Fresh water is available at all times.

Meetings

- A meeting is held at the end of the Trinity term or at the beginning of the academic year with all carers/parents. Information and routines are explained.
- Two parent/carers consultations are held throughout the year.
- Parents offered opportunity to discuss Pupil Profiles at the end of the Trinity Term.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Recording

- To ensure our policies and procedures remain effective we will monitor and review them annually to ensure our strategies meet the overall aims of our Equal Opportunities Policy in promoting equality and inclusion and in valuing diversity.
- We provide a complaints procedure and a complaints summary record for parents to see.
- It is the responsibility of all staff at St Mary's to report all incidents of discrimination to the Head of Prep/the Headmistress who will immediately make clear the unacceptability of such behaviour and attitudes and take appropriate action;
- Where incidents of discrimination by any adult or child have occurred the Head of Prep Department will make a record of the incident.
- Where children have been discriminated against, the children's parents will be informed of the incident and of the action to be taken. The identity of all parties involved will remain confidential and not be disclosed.
- We recognise that incidents of racial discrimination are a serious offence in line with the Public Order Act 1986 and The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and as such all incidents of racial discrimination by staff, whether the discrimination is towards an adult or a child, will require disciplinary action to be taken.

Supporting Children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD)

We, at St Mary's, have regard for the DfE SEND Code of Practice 2015 including the requirements for Early Years Education.

We recognise the DfE definition of Special Educational Needs. *"Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them"*

Although we acknowledge that not all children with a disability have a special educational need we have regard for the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and will make reasonable adjustments to include all children and their families.

The SEND Code of Practice requires all staff to be fully aware of the setting's procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with special educational needs, therefore all members of staff especially Key People recognise it is their responsibility to seek and exchange information from parents.

The Role of the Learning Support teacher is to:

- Work in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals in gathering and sharing information to build positive partnerships.
- Ensure that parents are informed at all stages of assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education.
- Record and collate information for all children with special educational needs.
- Liaise with other providers and professionals involved with children with special educational needs and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools i.e. exchange of children's records with parental permission.
- Oversee our system of planning, implementing, monitoring and reviewing individual educational plans (IEPs) for children with special educational needs, taking into account the views of the children and their parents/carers.
- Identify training needs for all members of staff to promote inclusive practice.
- Ensure the annual review of the Equal Opportunities policy is shared with parents and staff.
- Recognise the need for confidentiality and sensitivity to be maintained at all times.
- The Head of Prep Department liaises with the Learning Support teacher to ensure that the Code of Practice is implemented. Her role is to:
 - Coordinate review meetings
 - Contact and liaise with outside agencies
 - Liaise with parents
 - Complete compulsory paperwork/documents
 - Complete training
 - Support and liaise with staff in meeting children's needs and in meeting the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice.

Administration of Medicines:

- We ensure that staff are fully aware of St Mary's School policy on the Administration of Medicines.

Legal framework;

- The Equality Act 2010
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, 2005
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1976,1986

- Age Discrimination Act 2006
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- Children Act 1989, 2004
- Early Years Education and Grant Maintained Schools Act 1996
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups 2006
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code 2015
- Green paper : Excellence for All Children ; Meeting Special Educational Needs 1997
- Every Child Matters
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- Human Rights Act 1998
- EYFS 2017
- Public Order Act 1986
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- KCSIE (2019)

Policy Links

- Admissions Policy
- Administration of Medicines Policy
- Behaviour and Sanctions Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Use of Physical Restraint Policy
- see also: Parent School Contract

F. Settling in Procedure

At St Mary's School we believe that young children need time to adjust to a new environment and to new people, as well as to the social, emotional, physical and intellectual demands these make of them. Our aim is to provide a reassuring and welcoming environment where children and their parents or carers feel safe, included, comfortable and valued. We have a staggered entry for Nursery and Reception girls as part of the settling in process.

Aims

To carefully support children and parents or carers as they are gradually introduced to, and become familiar with, the new environment and the expectations of school life.

To provide sufficient time and an environment in which:

- We can build good relationships with parents or carers by respecting their values and wishes.
- We can work in partnership with parents/ carers to support each child during their settling in period.
- Our children can feel safe, secure and valued.
- Our children can feel confident and happy through consistent daily routines and classroom organisation.
- Positive relationships are established between all involved.
- Positive attitudes and skills for lifelong learning are established.
- Children develop trust, self-esteem and respect for all aspects of the school environment from the adult role models in our setting.
- Every child can come confidently, happily and independently into a safe and secure learning environment where they feel ready to respond positively.

Before children start St Mary's School:

- Parents/carers are invited to view the school to ensure we can meet the needs of their children.
- Parents/carers receive a detailed prospectus and Parent Handbook containing information on policies and practices.
- Parent/carers are invited to a 'Familiarisation Session' where:
 - The children are able to explore the class environment and resources.
 - Parents or carers meet with the Class Teacher and assistant to discuss the procedures for the first day at school and our approach to learning and teaching.
 - Parents or carers meet with the Head of Prep Department to discuss general school routines and to ask questions.

When children start at St. Mary's School:

- Children and parents/carers are welcomed at the door.
- Children are helped to identify drawers and pegs by their name labels.
- Belongings are stored appropriately, with adult help.
- Activities are set out for easy access and free choice, ensuring an inviting environment
- Staff are on hand to reassure, help and explain.
- Parents/ carers are encouraged to stay until the child is comfortable enough to be left. This routine continues for as long as necessary for each individual child.
- Nursery girls are gradually introduced into areas beyond their immediate environment such as the school playground and the school hall and integrated into whole school assemblies and singing sessions.
- Reception girls are carefully introduced and integrated into whole school Assemblies, singing sessions and playtimes.

- Parents/carers in EYFS are invited to a 'Welcome Meeting' where the curriculum, class topics and activities are discussed in more detail.
- We continue to build relationships with parents or carers through day to day contact, making them feel welcome.

There is a Pre-Prep parent representative who provides links with the SMA.

G. EYFS OUTINGS

St Mary's School places great value on educational visits for all of its Early Years children, recognising that they provide a unique opportunity to enhance the curriculum and to extend and support class based work. They provide opportunities which cannot be provided on site and can extend the knowledge and understanding of our youngest pupils.

Procedures for Outings

St Mary's School has Employers' Liability Insurance and public liability insurance, as well as a group travel policy that covers any visit made by the Early Years Department. Cover includes cancellation or delay, medical expenses, replacement of personal possessions and money.

- SCHOOL MINIBUS

No one is allowed to drive the school minibus unless s/he has qualified as a minibus driver.

- USE OF HIRED TRANSPORT

If necessary, we hire a coach for the Reception visit. All drivers have current DBS checks, and should carry mobile phones. We only book vehicles with front-facing seats that are fitted with seat belts.

- CONSENT

We require written consent from parents every time that we take their daughters off-site. We are unable to take any child without a completed and signed consent form, which includes details of where a parent may be contacted in an emergency.

Visits made by the Nursery are all to local venues. Parents will be told about the visits in advance.

- RISK ASSESSMENTS

Safety is our top priority. A rigorous risk assessment is carried out for outings for all school visits and outings, including those of the Early Years setting.

- HEAD COUNTS

The Teacher in charge conducts, or arranges for another Teacher or Teaching Assistant to conduct a head count of the children:

- Before leaving school
- On sitting down in the coach (If applicable)
- On arrival at the destination
- On leaving the destination

- On arrival back at the school

Where we walk, the children walk in pairs, with one adult at the front and one at the back. Children are reminded about basic road safety and of the expected standards of behaviour. When we travel by coach, a member of staff will check that all the pupils are sitting properly and wearing their seat belts.

- **MISSING CHILD POLICY**

Our procedures are structured to ensure that this does not happen; but in the event that a child is missing – either from school, or on a visit, we follow the procedures set out in our Missing Child policy

- **FIRST AID BOX**

The Teacher in charge takes a First Aid kit, list of emergency contact numbers and a mobile phone with him/her on every outing. We carry bottled water on all of our longer visits.

- **DELAY**

The Teacher in Charge will ring the school if there is any delay, for example, because of heavy traffic. The school has a list and contact details for all children on the trip and will phone the parents to warn them of a delay.

- **STAFF RATIOS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

We operate a staffing ratio of 1:8 in Reception for all off-site visits and 1:6 in Nursery. There is always at least one Teacher, one of whom will have been designated in charge of the visit.

At least one member of staff is qualified in Paediatric First Aid. Each staff member should be allocated to a small group of children that they are responsible for during the entire trip.

- **STICKERS** Children are provided with sticker labels to wear on their coat, which give the name and telephone number of the setting – but never the name of the child.

Prior to the visit

Prepare packs for the accompanying staff, the School Office, Head of Prep Department

- The itinerary (including address, phone numbers etc of all location to be visited)
- The teacher in charge's mobile number or the school mobile
- Mobile numbers of all participating staff
- A list of pupils, together with copies of their parental contact forms (which includes details of each pupils' medical conditions)
- Emergency contact numbers for the Head of Prep, the Director of Studies
- Contact details for the School Secretary
- Details from the Coach company.
- A copy of the risk assessment.
- Location of local hospital

During the visit

Primary responsibility for the safe conduct of the visit rests with the Teacher in Charge. She has sole responsibility for amending the itinerary or cancelling the visit in the event of unforeseen delay or sudden deterioration in weather conditions. She may delegate part or all of the responsibility for the following to one or more of the accompanying staff:

- Carrying out (and recording) head counts of the children on leaving school, on getting on and off each form of transport, entering or leaving a theatre, museum, centre, etc
- Checking that all pupils wear their seat belts
- Enforcing expected standards of behaviour
- Keeping account of all expenditure
- Recording any accidents or near misses

Illness or Minor Accidents

If a pupil has a minor accident or becomes ill, the Teacher in Charge, or another member of staff will phone her parent's emergency contact number at once and arrange for her to be collected. If contact cannot be made, the Teacher in Charge, or another member of staff, will take her to the local hospital or, if the illness is more minor, the local doctors' surgery. A member of staff will remain with the child at the hospital or doctors until a parent or carer arrives.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of a serious accident resulting in the death or injury of one or more of the pupils and staff, the Teacher in Charge's first priority would be to ensure the safety of all children. They will then summon the emergency services and arrange for medical attention for the injured and for parents to be contacted. One of the accompanying members of staff should accompany the injured pupil(s) to hospital and should remain with the child/children until their parents arrive. Ensure that the rest of the group are safe and looked after, and inform the Head of Prep Department and Headmistress of what has happened.

(Emergency arrangements and critical incident procedures would be implemented – see whole school policy)

Sample St Mary's EYFS Outing Risk Assessment

Areas to consider	What I have in place already	What I need to put in place
Do I have the necessary staff pupil ratios for this outing?		
Does at least one member of staff have a current paediatric first aid certificate?		

How far are we going to walk and are the walking children realistically able to walk that far?		
Have I taught the children about road safety?		
Have I taught the children about stranger danger?		
Have I got the following with me? First Aid Kit Emergency contact details of the children Mobile phone – charged up		
Have I made provision for a change in the weather? (Rain etc)		
How are we going to get there safely? Walk/minibus/coach?		
What do I need to take e.g. food, drink, medication, spare clothes, wet wipes, plastic bag, and a towel?		
Have I been to this venue before? What facilities does it have? Toilets Food Pond/lake Animals		
How do I ensure that the children do not run off in the venue?		

Is the area safe? Is there any broken glass in the area? Animal faeces? Discarded needles etc? How do I deal with it?		
Sticker labels for children with name of school and phone number of setting but NEVER child's name.		
Is there enough petrol in the minibus for the whole trip?		
Are there enough seats for each child, and are they age and weight appropriate and in good condition and booster seats?		
Do I have a first aid and the emergency contact details of all the children?		
How do I get all the children in and out of the minibus/coach to ensure their safety at all times?		
How do I manage the children's behaviour in the minibus/coach to prevent the driver from being distracted whilst driving?		
How do I teach the children about being safe in the coach/minibus wearing seat belts etc?		
Other		

H. Use of mobile phones and cameras

- The use of personal mobile phones and/or cameras in the EYFS is strictly prohibited. Where photographs are required, they must be taken on a school device or the EYFS

ipad and stored in strict accordance with the School's policy on taking and storing of images. (ie on the designated area on the School system). All mobile phones must be switched off in Paddington House and stored out of sight of the children.

Reviewed September 2019