

# OUR LADY IMMACULATE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Our Lady Immaculate  
Catholic Primary School  
A Multi-Academy

*"With God all things are possible"*

At Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School, we will inspire our children to achieve personal excellence for themselves and for the glory of God.

## Foundation Stage Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator
Autumn 2022	Autumn 2023	Daniel Daley

Headteacher:	Lesley Roche
Chair of Governing Body:	Linda McSweeney

## **FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY DOCUMENT**

### **Introduction**

Our Lady Immaculate is a thriving Catholic learning community with Christ at the centre. We celebrate the uniqueness of every child and aim to educate and prepare our children to be independent, confident and to live life to the full. As a Catholic learning community, everything we do serves the Church's teaching of assisting parents as primary and principal educators to fulfil their role. Every decision is made with the children in mind, serving our Mission and Vision and following Virtues to live by, British Values and Global Values.

The Foundation Stage applies to children from three years of age to the end of Reception year. At Our Lady Immaculate School we provide for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the Reception group from the September following their fourth birthday (see "Admissions Arrangements" for more details on arrangements for new entrants). Applications greatly exceed the places available. The school's admissions policy and criteria for allocating places are strictly adhered to. Thirty children are admitted each September. Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal and have previously attended nursery schools or play groups. Children come from a wide catchment area and hence there can be around 17 feeder pre-school settings represented in the intake. Children have diverse cultural backgrounds and a large variety of spoken languages. We aim to integrate the children with this wealth of different experiences happily into our Foundation Class.

The foundation Stage education that we offer our children is based on our School Mission Statement and on the following principles;

- **A unique child**
- **Positive relationships**
- **Enabling environments**
- **Learning and Development**

### **A Unique Child**

At Our Lady Immaculate School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; therefore, we use praise and encouragement, as well as merit celebrations at assemblies, based on our Virtues to live by. There are also other class rewards such as stickers and house Points, WoW cloud and golden time to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### **Inclusion and meeting the diverse needs of children**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued at Our Lady Immaculate School.

We give all our children every opportunity to achieve their best by setting realistic and challenging expectations that meet their diverse needs.

An awareness and understanding of the requirements of equal opportunities that cover race, gender and disability and of the code of practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs is essential. We plan to meet the needs of both boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds, children of different

ethnic groups including Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers, and children from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We aim to meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

### **Safety**

It is important that all children are "safe". We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and why they exist. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all pupils. (See Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy).

### **Welfare**

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

- Promote the welfare of children
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives planned enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures for the management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

### **Positive Relationships**

We understand that children learn to be independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with our children and their families. We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contributions they make. We recognise the importance of the parent's role through:

- Meeting with parents through an induction evening in the summer term before children start school.\*
- Asking parents to give us written information about their child.

- Sending home an “All About Me” booklet that parents and children fill in together (to be brought to school when they start) to share things about home, likes and dislikes.
- Offering an induction afternoon for the child to meet their teacher and spend an afternoon in the classroom small groups of 15 children. \*
- Providing parents with a ‘Welcome Booklet’ that provides a wealth of practical school information that directly affects their child when they start school.
- Home visits prior to the children starting school.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the class teacher if they have any concerns.
- Offering regular opportunities for parents to come in to discuss their child’s progress with the teacher. \*
- Having opportunities for parents to make contributions to their child’s learning by sending in items for different topics and through attending Assemblies.
- Tapestry on-line learning journal where parents are given up-to-date observations about their child’s progress and involvement. They are encouraged to comment on school observations or upload their own.

\*Alternatives were put in place due to COVID19

As part of or transition into school, we also liaise closely with local preschools as part of a local cluster group. We work together to ensure that the children are school ready and also discuss specific needs. For known SEN children, the school SENCO also liaises directly with relevant preschools to ensure that everything is in place prior to the child starting.

### **Key Person**

In accordance with the “Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage” document, every child must be assigned a “**Key Person**”. This person’s role is to care for and settle the child, cater for individual needs and to build a relationship with their parents. The staffing in our Foundation Class is a Class Teacher and one Nursery Nurse. Therefore, a child’s key worker will be the Class Teacher or, in their absence, the Nursery Nurse. All staff aim to develop good relationships with all children in the setting, interacting positively and taking time to listen to them. All members of the school community are encouraged to be introduced to the children and older children also play a part in the nurturing of the Foundation Class children.

### **Learning and Development**

At Our Lady Immaculate School 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 interconnected. The EYFS ‘characteristics of effective learning’ are also interwoven into every aspect of our curriculum.

The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children as learners. The Foundation Stage curriculum is organised into 7 areas of learning. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, building their capacity to learn and form relationships. These are the **prime areas** and they are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development

- Personal, social and emotional development.

**Communication and Language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment to develop skills in expressing themselves and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

**Physical Development** involves providing opportunities for children to be active and interactive to develop co-ordination, control and movement. They must be helped to understand the importance of physical activity and make healthy choices in relation to food.

**PSED** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others. To develop positive relationships and respect for others, develop social skills and how to manage their feelings. To understand appropriate behaviours and have confidence in their own abilities.

There are four **specific areas**, through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

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

**Literacy** development involves linking sounds and letters and learning to read and write. Children need to be offered a wide range of reading materials.

**Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating and a knowledge of space, shape and measures.

**Understanding the world** involves helping children to make sense of their physical and their community through exploration and observation.

**Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of materials and media. They need opportunities to share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through art, music, movement, dance, role-play and DT.

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. Effective teaching and learning will include playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically. The curriculum is delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are **Early Learning Goals** that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. The ELGs can be seen in full in the “Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage” in the co-ordinator’s file.

## **Characteristics of effective learning**

Much of our learning is done through play where we greatly value the characteristics of effective learning. A child's individual learning characteristic will determine the way they respond to both the teaching and learning taking place in the environment. The focus of the CoEL is on how children learn rather than what they learn i.e. process over outcome. Underpinning the CoEL is the understanding that during their earliest years, children form attitudes about learning that will last a lifetime. Children who receive the right sort of support and encouragement during these years will be creative, and adventurous learners throughout their lives. Children who do not receive this sort of support and interaction are likely to have a much different attitude about learning later on in life. Hence, why we nurture these CoELs to occur, but without forgetting that children are individuals who bring their own needs, talents and histories to the learning environment.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning identified by the EYFS are:

### **1. Playing and Exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

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

### **2. Active Learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

Our children are given some independence and control over their learning. Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. As they develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions and they experience satisfaction as they take ownership of their own learning. Being involved and concentrating, keeping on trying and enjoying what they set out to achieve.

### **3. Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Children are given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. The adult's support children's thinking and develop connections. They do this by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open and appropriate questions. Children are given time to think and to speak freely about what they are doing. They are able to access resources freely and are given the freedom to move themselves and the resources around the setting to extend their learning. Having their own ideas, making links and choosing the way to do things.

## **Teaching and Learning Style**

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning throughout Our Lady Immaculate School.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage 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 talk or other means of communication.
- 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 carefully planned curriculum that aims to help all children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage and to help the more able to develop further both in breadth and depth to working consistently beyond that level.
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents.
- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.
- The good relationships between our staff and staff in local EYFS school settings which enables us to share good practice and moderate.
- The clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do.
- The identification of training needs of adults working within the Foundation Stage.

### **Enabling Environments**

At Our Lady Immaculate School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development.

### **The classroom Learning Environment**

The classroom is organised to allow children access to a wide range of provision to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely.\* Equipment and resources are mostly located in designated areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Some activities do have to be put away daily but children play a part in the tidying and storing of equipment and resources.

We have a secure outdoor area where activities are planned to help children develop in all the 7 areas of learning. This is accessed freely all day at all times of the year. We regularly use the playground, field, Peace Garden and climbing area in the school playground. We make full weekly use of the Forest School learning environment.

\*During COVID19 we have organised a strict equipment rotation in order to ensure that the children still have a wide range of resources available everyday e.g. role play, malleable resources, books, construction equipment, pens and paper...

### **Observation, assessment and planning**

In Foundation Class we use the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation stage, Development Matters and the Foundation Stage Profile to guide our observations and planning. Medium term plans are based around termly or half termly themes. These are used to create weekly plans, however, these plans may alter in response to the needs, interests and achievements of the children.

Our assessment procedures are:

- At, or near, entry to the school we make Baseline observations and begin to use an individual Foundation stage profile for each child. We also use information from previous settings and parents to inform us.
- During each term we make regular observations of children in various situations, we keep records and make planned assessments during sessions and frequently make unplanned assessments, we update the individual profiles using Tapestry.
- Records of achievement and collections of work are kept to monitor a child's development in each area informed by observations, examples of work and teacher knowledge. A paper scrapbook of evidence, an on-line learning journal and writing books etc. are also kept for individual children with records of their learning and development. These are shared with the children and parents.
- At the end of a child's time in Foundation Stage, we complete the Foundation Stage Profile and send the data to the LEA. We use these Profiles to form the basis for reports to parents and for information to be passed on to the child's next teacher.
- To support children with special needs we use advice and support plans from specialist teachers, health professionals, SENCO and Nursery Nurse and LSA expertise.
- We use the individual profiles when setting targets for each pupil.
- The following information is transferred to the Year One teacher:
  - Foundation Stage Profile – that covers the prime and specific areas of learning
  - Records of reading attainment and books read
  - Year 1 teacher visits the children in their own EYFS environment.
  - Conversations with Year 1 teacher to ensure a smooth transition into Year 1

### **Monitoring and Evaluating**

The general principles for monitoring and evaluation are contained in the whole school policy for monitoring and evaluation. These principles were agreed by all staff.

We are involved in the following monitoring and evaluation of the provision within the Foundation Class

- **Observation** – every week either the teacher or nursery nurse takes on an observation role for at least half an hour. Different children are observed and these observations are recorded on Tapestry.
- **Classroom Evaluation** – we welcome observation sessions by other staff i.e. Headteacher and subject co-ordinator as part of regular appraisal of staff.
- **Staff discussions** – both formal and informal discussions regularly contain evaluations of our effectiveness.
- **Target setting** – the whole school has embarked on the process of prediction of attainment and target setting. We use Tapestry to track progress and achievement and we set individual targets.
- **Analysis of information** – we discuss the achievements of individuals and groups at regular evaluation sessions during the year. Interventions and extension support is then adjusted accordingly.
- **Content** – Our curriculum and our reports to parents are reviewed annually.



- **Resources and Equipment** – are regularly reviewed both for wear and tear and safety, but also to further enhance our provision.

### **Whole School Activities\***

In Foundation class, the children are gradually introduced to the whole school. As most children will attend school full time from September, they will have lunch in the school dining hall and be supervised at lunchtime play by midday assistants and may use a separate part of the infant playground for a short period of time.

From quite early on, Foundation class join the whole school for Assembly on Monday and Fridays. We have introduced a “Buddy” system whereby each Reception child is partnered with a Year 6 child. The children help them to feel part of the whole school family – help them to settle into school life. and may work with them on different activities as planned by their teachers. Foundation class lead a Nativity play in the Autumn Term and an infant assembly in the Spring Term.

\*These have been adapted due to COVID19.

### **Resources**

- **Staffing** – the Reception class is staffed by a qualified teacher and a qualified nursery nurse. Other adults who may be working under their supervision include LSA’s, students, work experience volunteers, adult volunteers and parent helpers. Groups working with volunteers and students do not exceed five children.
- **Resources and Equipment** – the equipment and resources both within the department and in the whole school, are available to the teachers, and children where appropriate. Resources are stored in a way which makes them easily accessible for both adults and children.

### **Links with other policies**

The Foundation Stage comply with the whole school policies that are in place in the following areas:

- Health and Safety
- Special Needs
- Equal Opportunities
- Racial Equality
- Performance Management
- Child Protection
- Teaching and Learning
- Home / School Agreement
- Safeguarding
- Policies for curriculum areas