

## EYFS Curriculum Policy

This policy applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) pupils at Saint Ronan's Pre-Prep. Saint Ronan's Nursery and Pre-Prep is an Independent School which fully recognises the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Early Years Foundation Stage promotes teaching and learning to ensure 'school readiness'.

### **The EYFS seeks to provide:**

- Quality and consistency so that every child makes good progress
- A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

### **The Aim of the EYFS at Saint Ronan's**

Our aim within our 2 Nursery classes and our 2 Reception classes is to support the learning and development of individual children by providing a balanced, broad, integrated, stimulating and differentiated curriculum. The curriculum includes teacher directed, teacher initiated and child initiated activities. It consists of topic based learning with activities planned to cover all 7 areas of learning. Along with embedded British Values across the curriculum we have key strategies which instill in our pupils a set of shared values that underpin our whole school ethos, celebrates today's multicultural society and are immersed throughout our curriculum.

We strive to provide a learning environment, which enables children to be:

- Secure, safe and happy
- Respectful of themselves and others
- Confident
- Compassionate and caring
- Tolerant and patient
- Curious and creative
- Appreciative and appreciated

### **Overarching principles of EYFS**

At Saint Ronan's Nursery and Pre-Prep our approach is to focus on the following objectives;

#### **Unique Child**

- To value children's race, gender, age, disability, culture, class and religion
- To embrace all children as individuals and to appreciate their uniqueness. Every child is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We give children the support and opportunities to develop these attributes.

### **Positive Relationships**

- To work in partnership with parents/carers and children
- To value parents/carers as the primary educators of the child
- To recognise children as part of communities, for example peer groups, families and the wider society
- To have high expectations of the children and staff
- To assess in order to help parents/carers and staff to recognise children's progress

### **Enabling Environments**

- To provide a safe, secure, stimulating environment,
- To ensure that all staff receive appropriate training in order to maintain high levels of practice
- To develop practice which includes the wider community adding to the richness of our curriculum
- To engage the children in a range of creative and imaginative experiences through the arts  
Children learn best through challenges, social interaction and active participation rather than passive observation in the classroom. Children gain motivation from direct experiences and practical activities which interest them and are based on existing knowledge and experience. They are encouraged to explore and investigate at their own pace, having some control of their own learning through choice of activities and availability of resources. They are encouraged to devise strategies and feel secure in persevering to completion of tasks.

### **Learning through Play**

Child initiated experiences help children to develop their understanding, skills and attitudes and promotes self-esteem. Staff take on active roles when children take the initiative, calling for a range of different behaviour: scaffolding, observing, facilitating, and play partnering with the aim of supporting the child in their choice. Teacher initiated and teacher directed activities target specific areas of learning and development and ensures a broad experience. Children benefit from purposeful, planned activities in order that they improve areas of weakness and extend areas of strength. The responses of empathetic staff are vital to provide new challenges for our Reception children; they will gain from the relationship with adults who can understand the world from their viewpoint.

### **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

- To adopt an inclusive approach where individual needs are met including children with SEN and disabilities
- To recognize children that are working at a higher level and to make sure that they too are being challenged.
- To cater for a variety of learning styles Effective learning occurs when teaching materials and input are set at a level that it is challenging but within the pupil's reach. Staff quickly ascertain what each child is or is not able to do, and offer support and guidance when planning next steps to help develop a child's potential.

## **The 7 Areas of Learning and Development**

EYFS Learning is an ongoing process throughout life: The areas of learning and development outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage [EYFS] Statutory Framework (March 2014) provide a structure for the planning of the curriculum for young children.

These areas of learning are described in the EYFS as:

### **Prime Areas:**

1. Communication and Language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

### **Specific Areas:**

4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

## **EYFS Curriculum**

Our curriculum incorporates all seven areas of learning. The children are provided with a variety of learning opportunities to meet the 17 ELGs by the end of the Reception year. All classes in the year group follow the courses guide which can be seen online with details of the topics covered. Our Long Term, Medium Term and Weekly plans include stated learning objectives across all seven areas and weekly plans with specific activities to meet the learning objectives. The weekly plans are written collaboratively by teachers in Nursery and Reception at weekly planning meetings. Learning Journeys and other assessment records include specific information to ensure all children's needs are met with consideration given to next steps, and that lessons are differentiated accordingly. We liaise with parents and outside agencies and adapt our curriculum to meet the requirements of children with specific learning needs. To ensure consistency of approach with regard to the high quality of teaching children's work is moderated annually.

### **Child Initiated Learning**

A large part of the curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes is accessed through child initiated learning. To ensure children get a wide range of experiences to access the whole curriculum during their play the classrooms are organized into four specific areas of learning called 'Zones'. Resources are organized in these zones for the children to access themselves easily. Each zone has it's own plan which shows ways in which the children can access every area of the curriculum. The plans show ways how practitioners may link children's play to different areas of the curriculum, what resources could be used as well as higher order questions to bring on children's learning. The Zone plans are displayed in

the classroom. In the Reception classes children choose one particular zone to play in during their Child Initiated play and will visit each Zone during the week. In the Nursery classes the children move freely from one Zone to the other.

**Imaginative:**

This area includes the role play area. This area is changed regularly and is usually linked to the term's topic. For example a hospital, Noah's Ark or even a space ship. The Nursery also has a permanent home area. Small world play can be found in the imaginative area.

**Creative:**

This area includes different types of art resources for the children to choose themselves. It includes junk modelling material, paper, glue, paint and many different collage materials.

**Discovery/Technology:**

This area includes interactive displays, a tuff spot tray with topic inspired exploration. In the Reception classes these are usually kept in the outdoor area.

**Construction**

In this area the construction resources such as wooden blocks and lego are kept.

## **Communication and Language**

Aspects of Communication and Language:-

- Listening and Attention - Learning to listen and speak emerges out of nonverbal communication, which includes facial expression, eye contact and hand gesture. These skills develop as children interact with others, listen to and use language, extend their vocabulary and experience stories, songs, poems and rhymes.
- Understanding – Children are encouraged to listen to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
- Speaking – Through a range of opportunities children are encouraged to speak showing an awareness of the listener. They develop their own narratives and connect ideas or events verbally. Using language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences. Children are encouraged to explain their thoughts and to clarify thinking and ideas or to refer to events they have observed or are curious about.

Children are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills, to express and explore their experiences, feelings and ideas by interacting with other children and adults. The adults are receptive and responsive to early vocalisation and gesture and encourage the children to initiate and sustain conversation. In a supportive environment they develop confidence and learn to speak clearly, to ask for what they need, to take turns during conversations, to ask questions, to give explanations, to concentrate when others speak etc. In our specialist Music lessons and within the classroom setting we use songs, music and instruments to develop listening and discrimination skills.

## **Physical Development**

Aspects of Physical Development:-

- Moving and Handling - Children are given opportunities to learn to move with confidence, imagination and safety, with an awareness of space, themselves and others. They use a range of small and large equipment.
- Health and Self-care - Children learn the importance of keeping healthy and the factors that contribute to maintaining their health. They are taught to manage their own personal hygiene.

Physical development is about developing awareness of bodies and learning to use bodies in a positive and confident way. It encourages progress in gross and fine motor co-ordination, awareness of space and learning about healthy living. Physical development is also concerned with how and why bodies move. As well as play, where children are encouraged to enjoying meeting the challenges of the variety of equipment available to them in the playground, there are lessons of Sports, Ballet and PE, where discrete skills, abilities and techniques are learned, practised and perfected.

## **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Aspects of Personal, Social and Emotional Development:-

- Self-confidence and Self-awareness - Children have a sense of their own value and understanding the need for sensitivity to significant events in their own and other people's lives. Children become interested, excited and motivated about their learning.
- Managing feelings and behaviour - Children talk about feelings and behaviour. They understand some behaviour is unacceptable and adjust to different situations. Children develop a growing understanding of what is right and wrong and why, together with learning about the impact of their words and actions on themselves and others.
- Making Relationships - Children form good relationships with others and work alongside others companionably. They play co-operatively and take into account other's ideas. Personal, social and emotional development is about understanding, respecting and valuing others and ourselves. It helps us to develop a sense of self, positive self-esteem and confidence. Children are encouraged to show respect for themselves and others, and our expectations of the children's behaviour are based on this premise. If a child hurts or injures another, whether physically or emotionally, s/he is encouraged to make amends in the most appropriate way. Children are encouraged to develop their sense of self and relationships with the wider world.

It is important that children are happy and experience a sense of belonging. Children are encouraged to see themselves as part of a group or class and to develop the skills and attitudes of sharing, turn taking, caring for others and things. Self-discipline is encouraged and staff guide children to develop strategies for self containment. Rules are initiated by the children and expressed in a way understandable to the children and are based on respect for themselves and others. Children are encouraged to negotiate and to talk through conflicts with the support of an adult and to make recompense if they are in the wrong. Staff act as appropriate role models for behaviour.

## **Literacy**

Aspects of Literacy:-

- Reading – Children develop an understanding and enjoyment of stories, books and rhymes, recognising that print carries meaning, both fiction and fact, and reading a range of familiar words and simple sentences.
- Writing – Children understand the relationship between the spoken and written word and through making marks, drawing and personal writing; children ascribe meaning to text and attempt to write for various purposes.

We encourage children to develop their understanding of this area through the following;

Reading In the early stages of EYFS - the children are read to and told stories and rhymes from a variety of cultures. There are daily opportunities to share books and talk about them. Each room has a collection of core books based on our termly topics with key texts read and displayed in the classrooms, as well as children's favourite stories. They are encouraged to retell well known stories and rhymes, talk about books they know and recognise familiar words and letters in meaningful contexts e.g. reading their own name, reading display labels, making labels for their pictures and drawings. These activities help them to understand that print conveys meaning. As the children progress into Reception classes a variety of reading schemes are available and these reflect the children's experiences and extends their understanding of themselves and others. We encourage children to develop their phonological awareness drawing on the strategies outlined within Letters and Sounds in Nursery and Reception.

Writing - the children are given many opportunities to develop their writing skills, building on the experience they already have. We help them to understand that print conveys meaning, the difference between writing and drawing and to understand the conventions of the English script i.e. print moves from left to right across the page and from top to bottom, that lines of writing are divided into words, that words are divided into letters and that letters have a name and sound. We encourage and support the children's early mark making. Children are introduced to other scripts as appropriate and introduced to correct letter formation at the appropriate stage of development.

## **Mathematics**

Aspects of Mathematics:-

- Numbers - Children know and use numbers and counting in play, and begin to recognise and use numbers reliably, to develop mathematical ideas and to solve problems. To develop an awareness of the relationship between numbers and amounts and know that numbers can be combined to be 'added together' and can be separated by 'taking away' and that two or more amounts can be compared.
- Shape, Space and Measures – Children learn to identify shapes and quantities, and develop appropriate vocabulary. Children use their knowledge to develop ideas and to solve mathematical problems. Mathematics helps to make sense of the world through an understanding of similarity and difference, pattern and logic.

We use mathematical ideas to analyse and communicate information and ideas and to tackle a range of practical tasks and real life problems. Mathematics is about developing an awareness of concepts, such as size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money. It helps us to solve problems relating to shape, position, and size and quantity. Throughout Nursery Reception children will be given opportunities to develop an awareness of numbers, counting, addition, subtraction, doubling, halving and sharing.

## **Understanding the World**

Aspects Understanding the World:-

- People and communities- Children learn about their own and other people's cultures in order to understand and celebrate the similarities and differences between them in a diverse society. Children understand and respect their own needs, views, cultures and beliefs and those of other people.
- The World- Children investigate objects and materials and their properties, learn about change and patterns, similarities and differences, and question how and why things work. They begin to find out about past and present events relevant to their own lives or those of their families. They become aware of and interested in the natural world, and find out about their local area, knowing what they like and dislike about it.
- Technology - Children find out about and learn how to use appropriate information technology such as computers and programmable toys that support their learning.

## **Expressive Arts and Design**

Aspects of Expressive Arts and Design:-

- Exploring and using media and materials – Children sing songs, make music and dance and experiment. Children explore and engage with a widening range of media and materials, to find out about, think about and work with colour, texture, shape, space and form in two and three dimensions. Children respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch or feel and to express and communicate their own ideas, thoughts and feelings.
- Being imaginative – Children represent their own ideas through design and technology, art, music, dance, role play and stories. They explore sound, movement and music, to focus on how sounds can be made and changed and how sounds can be recognised and repeated from a pattern, exploring movement, matching movements to music and singing simple songs from memory. Children develop and build imaginations through stories, role-plays, imaginative play, dance, music, design, and art. Music is the exploration of sound, voice and instrumentation through performance and composition. It involves experimenting using the following elements: timbre, texture, dynamics, tempo, duration, harmony etc. Dance is a form of expression, which encompasses the development of the whole child through production, performance and composition. Dance enables children to develop spatial awareness and discover the movement possibilities of their own bodies. It involves experimenting with the following elements: basic actions, drama, and imaginative play.

## **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

Underpinning all areas of the curriculum are the Characteristics of Effective Learning. The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the prime and specific areas of learning are all interconnected. They underpin everything we offer in our environment. Our skillful practitioners observe children's play and know when to intervene and give guidance. This support helps our children make significant progress in their learning. We do not push children but look closely at their emotional and intellectual abilities and find out what they can do.

### **The Characteristics of Effective Learning are**

- **Playing and Exploring (Engagement)-**

- Finding out and exploring

- Playing with what they know

- Being willing to 'have a go'

- Our Zones actively encourage and offer children the opportunity to play and explore. Within our Zones children are able to explore in every area of your provision. Within these zones, there are opportunities for children to explore and investigate using open-ended resources. Our children are able to use their imagination and explore their surroundings.

- **Active Learning (Motivation)-**

- Being involved and concentrating

- Keeping trying

- We want our children to enjoy achieving what they set out to do, to concentrate and to keep on trying even if they encounter difficulties. We want all our children to demonstrate active learning when engaging in activities that require them to use their mental abilities including teacher led and teacher directed, for example children will show a can-do attitude when attempting to do a task, they will show a great deal of concentration and will rarely give up on the task. We strive to create an exciting environment where our children want to become active learners and adults tune into their interests.

- **Creating and Thinking Critically (Thinking)-**

- Having their own ideas

- Making links

- Choosing ways to do things

- We want children to develop their own ideas, make links and develop strategies. For our children to be creative and critically think, we as practitioners provide children with lots of opportunities to work things out on their own or with others and develop their problem solving skills. Our experienced practitioners know when to intervene and scaffold children's learning. As we know young children observe what is happening around them and they absorb the information. As children begin to engage fully in activities, they will start asking questions about how things work. Our Zone plans in Nursery and Reception and Nursery Activity plans include open-ended questions to help extend the learning opportunities

### **Assessment in the EYFS**

In Nursery and Reception we create Learning Journals which details the children's progress across all areas of learning. The primary purpose of the Learning Journal is to communicate progress with parents. The following list details what we have in place to collect our evidence

Nursery:

- Entry Level Profile – completed in the first half term. This is also used as our Two Year check.



- Beginning of term assessments including Write Dance Test (Handwriting), Number and Letter recognition, Phonic - sounds assessment, maths assessment
- Incidental observations are made throughout the term to monitor the children's learning and put into their Learning Journals.
- Classroom monitor which tracks children's progress against the EYFS development matters and the ELGs

#### In Reception

- Classroom monitor which tracks children's progress against the EYFS development matters and the ELGs
- the children are assessed during the first few weeks of the Autumn Term a baseline assessment is taken in the areas of maths and literacy. Phonics assessment is taken at the beginning of the Lent Term and a final assessment for the EYFS curriculum is taken during the second half of the Summer Term every child completes an assessment. Through Classroom Monitor these results are reported to the LEA as a statutory requirement of the EYFS curriculum.
- Termly assessments for Literacy/Numeracy based on the learning objectives covered in class

#### **SEND**

Our clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND children is found in our SEND policy. We focus on the regular monitoring and review of children's progress and react accordingly. When we identify a child who is behind the expected levels we gather information and initiate our cycle of actions- assessment/ planning/ doing/ reviewing. Parents are informed whenever the school provides additional support for children.