

St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School Hoddesdon



EYFS Policy September 2024

Renewal: September 2025

MISSION STATEMENT

*'We come to school to live and learn happily together
by loving ourselves and each other as Jesus teaches us to'*

Our Vision:

We aim to provide our children with an education that prepares them for the responsibilities and opportunities that arise throughout life in the 21st Century.

Our active partnership between Home, Parish and the wider community continues to grow with each playing a role in the continual development of our School.

We strive to provide a curriculum that reflects on learning and teaching practice to create a stimulating educational environment that caters for individual needs.

We aim for every person that comes into our school to be touched by our compassionate ethos where the gospel values are seen to be at work.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School, children join the Nursery class in the year that they turn four. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children "learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe." We aim to support children in their teaching and learning to "ensure children's 'school readiness' and give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life."

(Early Years Statutory Framework Effective 4th January 2024)

The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles:

- A Unique Child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive Relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling Environments – with teaching and support from adults, where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of children and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.
- Learning and Developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

A Unique Child

We recognise every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued at St. Augustine's. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to

support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school's SENCO is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEND.

We 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 wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to 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.

Dyslexia Friendly

In order to accommodate the individual's particular learning style, planning wherever possible, will be in a multi-sensory way so the various activities cater for all pupils in the spirit of inclusion. There will also be a consideration of how to record outcomes so that the pupil is offered a variety of methods and is not inhibited by any specific difficulty.

Safeguarding and Welfare

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

Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See school's Children Protection Policy)

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."

At St. Augustine's School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework January 2024.

We understand that we are required to;

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of children by having regard to the Government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and to the 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales'. We are also required to have regard to the Government's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance. If we have concerns about a child's safety or welfare, we will notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. This means the local children's social care services and, in emergencies, the police.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill. We also promote good oral health through discussions about the effects of eating too many sweet things and the importance of brushing your teeth.
- 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 or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Training

All staff within the Early Years are aware of, and follow the school policies for child protection and safeguarding. All staff receive Level 1 training and annual updates on safeguarding and being alert to the signs of abuse. It is the responsibility of the Governing Body and the Head Teacher to ensure that all employees are aware of their responsibility to report any allegation or possible concern of a child protection nature. Failure to report may (a) put a child at risk and (b) imply a breach of the employee's contractual duty. Staff must be aware of this procedure, understand their responsibilities and know where in the school a copy of the procedure is to be found.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Safeguarding Policy.

Positive Relationships

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

Working with Parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

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

Key Person

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through;

- A visit by the Nursery Teacher to the Pre-School setting or the Reception Teacher to a Nursery setting to enable the observation of a child in their current setting and a discussion with the key person regarding individual learning needs.
- Support children through the transition to Nursery or Reception by arranging a visit to either class prior to their joining us. Nursery children who are moving to Reception will spend time in Class with the teacher during the term before they move. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss school routines, expectations and behaviour as well as detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading and phonics. Dates will be sent out in an information pack prior to their child starting school.
- There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Summer term.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: book sharing sessions, learning journal sharing sessions, celebration assemblies, school visits, enterprise days.
- Providing parents with an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development at home, which informs planning and provision.

- Written contact through weekly whole school Newsletters as well as the acknowledgement that parents can ring school to arrange an appointment (if needed) with their child's teacher.
- Ensuring all parents know that their child's Teacher and Early Years Practitioners are their Key Person.
- By providing a quiet and confidential area where parents are able to discuss any concerns with their child's teacher.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. There is effective learning that builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual Learning Journals. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by practitioners. Practitioners will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

Learning and Development

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from January 2024.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Teachers and learning assistants provide the curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes. There are seven areas of learning and development; three are "**prime areas**," and four "**specific areas**."

The prime areas are;

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

The prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences and run through and support learning in all other areas. Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are;

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

The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge; they grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. We deliver learning for all of the areas through purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Through careful observations, assessments and planning, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the SENCO in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

As stated in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework January 2024; 'Assessment should not involve long breaks from interaction with children or require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. Practitioners are not be required to prove this through collection of physical evidence.'

For children in Reception, the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts Reception. It is an activity-based assessment of pupils' starting points in Communication, Language and Literacy and Mathematics. This information is therefore only relevant to Reception teachers in school-based provision.

Wellcomm speech and language screening takes place for Nursery and Reception pupils. The screening enables identification of pupils who are experiencing barriers to speech and language development so that early support and intervention can be immediately put in place.

Learning through Play

“The EYFS is about what children learn, as well as how they learn. Effective practice is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other and through adult-guided learning”.

(Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework January 2024)

At St. Augustine’s:

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners provide a balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Planning and guided children’s activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At St. Augustine’s we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are;

- Playing and Exploring (Engagement) - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’;
- Active Learning (Motivation) - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- Creating and Thinking Critically (Thinking) - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Taken from Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework January 2024)

Religious Education is also taught in the Nursery and Reception classes in accordance with Westminster guidelines.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching

- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and Safety

At St. Augustine's, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see Whole School Risk Assessment Policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, in the Staff Handbook, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and the EYFS Procedures document, there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children.

In line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework January 2024, at St. Augustine's we undertake;

Medicines

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring there are systems in place to ensure the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date.

- Prescription medicines must not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist (medicines containing aspirin should only be given if prescribed by a doctor).
- Training is provided for practitioners where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge.
- Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer.
- At St. Augustine's, a written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day.

Illness

- Procedures are in place for responding to children who are ill or infectious, taking necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection, and taking appropriate action if children are ill.

RED – STAY AT HOME	Sickness and Diarrhoea – 48 hours must have elapsed before a child can return to school from the last episode. Other contagious and infectious diseases – see the link below.
AMBER – SEEK ADVICE	Headache, Feeling Sick, Tummy Ache, Children often feel unwell or say they feel unwell if they are anxious, so if in doubt contact the school for advice.
GREEN – COME TO SCHOOL	Mild Cough, Cold, Sore Throat, Feeling Tired, Mild Headache. We will always contact you if your child is ill and needs to go home.

[Children and young people settings: tools and resources - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/children-and-young-people-settings-tools-and-resources)

Food and Drink

St Augustine's also ensures that;

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Each classroom has an area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks.

Accident and Injury

- A First Aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see Accident and Injury Policy).
- All Early Years Practitioners are first aid trained, with some, holding a Paediatric First Aid Certificate.
- The EYFS Leader is the lead behaviour manager for the Early Years.
- The school's Health and Safety Policy and Procedures, as well as the EYFS Procedures document, cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.

- The school's Safeguarding Policy states how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras on iPads that are used in school must not be used for practitioner's own personal use.
- Appropriate clothing, in particular in relation to the wearing of heels (stilettos or a heel that comes to a point). Practitioners are expected to wear clothing that supports them in getting to a child's level and playing and engaging with children at floor level.

Transition

From Pre-school /Feeder settings

During the Summer term prior to a child's entry into the Nursery or Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition;

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.
- During the Summer term parents are encouraged to complete an "All About Me" booklet. It is used during the Autumn term to support transition and to inform planning.
- Children are invited for at least two school visits during the Summer term before starting school. This provides an opportunity for children to become familiar with Early Years Practitioners and their new learning environment.
- Members of staff from St. Augustine's make visits to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children at St. Augustine's Under 5's (main feeder setting) will have visits with their Key Persons into school where they get an opportunity to engage with the current Nursery or Reception children.
- Children from other feeders will be invited for visits on the same days as the Under 5's to ensure all children become familiar with each other before starting.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support or are part of the Families First process.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. This gives parents, carers and staff a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding, abilities

and progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes observations, discussions with parents and carers, and other information that offers a useful contribution. Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The profile shows whether children are meeting, exceeding or not yet reaching (emerging) expected levels of development. Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with information on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the Characteristics of Effective Learning. This informs the Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head teacher and EYFS Leader will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.