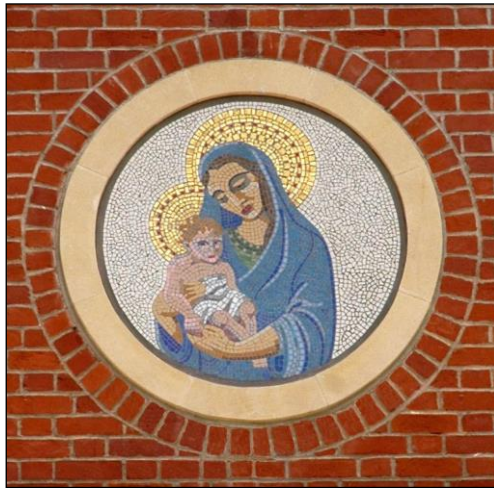


Cottesmore St Mary Catholic Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



'Mane nobiscum Domine'
(Abide with us O Lord)

Date of policy review: February 2015
Next review: February 2018

Policy written by: Lucy Hancock

Policy reviewed & passed by: Curriculum Committee

Key people responsible for Early Years Foundation Stage: Lucy Hancock

Other policies linked to this policy: Assessment, Phonics, Maths, Inclusion, Homework, Reading

Contents:

Mission Statement and Rationale – page 3

Aims – page 4

Curriculum – page 4

Assessment – page 5

Induction into the Foundation Stage – page 5

From the Foundation Stage into Year 1 – page 6

Parents and Guardians – page 6

Equal Opportunities – page 7

Inclusion – page 7

This document outlines the philosophy, aims and principles of Early Years teaching and learning in Reception at Cottessmore St Mary's Catholic Primary School. The document underpins practice in all areas of provision.

Mission Statement

*'Mane nobiscum Domine',
- abide with us O Lord.*

God made each one of us. We are all unique.
He loves each one of us and He calls us by name to
do His work by living the Gospel daily.
Children, parents and all those who work here
belong to our school family.
We learn to show compassion, love and respect
for each other and the world in which we live.
We always try to do our best and rejoice in each
others' successes.
We pray and celebrate together.
We work together to make the most of every
opportunity knowing that we all have a special part
to play in the building of God's world.

Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. At Cottessmore St Mary Catholic Primary School, all children join us the academic year in which they turn five.

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

**The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework,
Department for Education, 2014**

The EYFS is the area of education upon which young children build the rest of their lives. At our school, we believe that all learners should be given the opportunity to experience the best possible start to their education, both educationally, emotionally and spiritually, to ensure they flourish throughout their school years and on into adulthood.

Aims

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It sets out a series of Early Learning Goals for children to work towards by the time they reach the end of the EYFS at age 5.

We aim to provide a broad curriculum which will enable each child to develop in their own way. In order to do this, we follow four guiding principles from the EYFS:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

We aim to provide opportunities for learning through:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Curriculum

In line with the EYFS, our curriculum is split into three prime areas of communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. We also consider four other areas that support the prime areas, which are literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design.

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Planning is always informed by observations the Foundation Stage staff have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs.

At Cottesmore, we value play as a fundamental part of the learning process in the Foundation Stage. The indoor and outdoor environment are set up so that the children are able to access resources and develop their own play and learning both independently and through adult interaction and direction. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules.

A 'Learning Journal' will be kept for each child throughout the year. This will include the children's work, photographic evidence, comments from home and comments from the child. They also have books to record their sounds during phonics lessons and, as the year progresses, they start a 'writing journal'. Teachers will mark this work through comments that help to explain the learning and using the marking codes at the front of the journals. Next steps will be identified and shown on the work. When useful, stamps or simple comments will show the child their next steps or how to extend their learning.

Assessment

At Cottesmore, we use the principles of assessment for learning. We review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's next steps. All adults who interact with the child are expected to contribute to the assessment process.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. It is carried out by both teachers and teaching assistants working in the classroom. Formative assessment takes the form of planned and spontaneous observations and focused observations. They can be recorded on group assessment sheets e.g. sounds, numbers or high frequency words, post-it notes, assessment books or on the ipad. Staff will also consider annotated examples of work, photographs, and information from parents. We plan for observations when undertaking our medium and short term planning.

An assessment file will include:

* *Observations not included in each child's Learning Journal.*

Each child will have at least 1 focused observation a term.

* *Specific task observations.*

When an adult carries out a focused activity (indoors and outdoors) observations are recorded on a class assessment sheet.

* *Phonics assessments*

* *Bookworm assessments*

Guided Reading observations and *Closing the Gap group assessments* are kept in separate files.

Each child also has a digital file of photographic evidence collected from the ipad, which will be used to inform next steps.

Summative assessment

The children are assessed on-entry to the Foundation Stage. They are then assessed at the end of the each term, in line with the rest of the school, and their progress towards the ELG is recorded on SIMS.

At the end of the Foundation Stage parents are given a written summary of a child's attainment against the early learning goals (ELGs). For each ELG this states whether their child is:

- meeting expected levels of development
- exceeding expected levels or
- not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

This data is moderated internally and within the school's cluster group to ensure that the judgements are consistent and accurate. It can also be moderated by the Local Authority, and will need to be submitted to the Local Authority at the end of the year.

Induction into the Foundation Stage

At Cottesmore we have over 15 feeder nurseries; however, we have established links between the local nursery settings and the reception class. Transfer records inform the teachers about the new intake. If it is required, visits can be made in order to aid the induction process further.

A parents meeting is held by the Head teacher and Foundation Stage Leader in the Summer Term to introduce parents and guardians to the school. The induction process and reception curriculum are also introduced. Parents and guardians have the opportunity to meet their class teachers and visit

the reception classrooms. They are also given a reception brochure which outlines the reception curriculum and school routines, along with any other necessary documentation.

During the summer term before entry, all prospective children are invited to a Teddy Bear's Picnic on the school field. They are also invited to the school for an afternoon play visit; some of the current Reception children become buddies to the visiting children and show them the learning environment. Children and their families are also invited to the Summer Fair.

During the two week induction period in September, children are split into groups to allow them to get to know their new setting and friends in a smaller group. This helps children to feel more secure. It lets the staff get to know the children individually and allows the reception teachers to carry out initial assessments.

From the Foundation Stage into Year 1

Reception and Year 1 teachers work together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible:

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the reception year
- Reception teachers plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer term, encouraging less dependence on adult support
- In line with the whole school policy the two reception classes are mixed at the end of reception. Children have the opportunity to carry out activities in their new classes towards the end of the year to prepare them for Year 1
- Reception children meet other teachers during worship and other whole school activities during the reception year
- EYFS Profile are passed on to year 1 teachers and discussed. Reception and year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July
- Reception children visit their new Year 1 class and teacher for a minimum of one morning/afternoon in July
- Year 1 classrooms are set up to include learning areas similar to the reception classroom

Parents and Guardians

We recognise that parents and guardians are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. Our aim is to develop a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. We do this through:

- outlining the reception curriculum to parents and guardians during the new parents meeting in June, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home
- inviting parents to stay with their child on the initial visit in September to help their child become familiar with the classroom, outdoor area and toilets
- encouraging parents and guardians to complete the home/school contract
- inviting parents to a 'meet the teacher' session in September where they can find out about the class routines and expectations
- inviting people from home into regular class events such as plays, masses and trips, including half-termly workshares and class events
- inviting parents to maths and phonics meetings at the start of the year to outline the curriculum and how they can support their children at home
- encouraging parents and guardians to listen to their child read each night and informing them of ways they can support their child through tasks to complete at home
- operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents and guardians can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner

- providing a formal meeting for parents each term 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 each school year;

Equal Opportunities

At Cottesmore we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life. We work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. All staff, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

Inclusion

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

Progress is monitored and reviewed formally every term through Pupil Progress meetings, held with the school's SENCo. The SENCo is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.