

St Martin's Catholic Primary School



EYFS Policy

Our Mission Statement

Where children Love to Learn and Learn to Love.

***Psalm 25:5* Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.**

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Introduction:

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) refers to the time from birth to the age of five. This early development and learning stage is a distinct phase in each child's education and should provide an essential and firm foundation for their future school life.

"All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential."

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, Department for Education (DfE), published 8 December 2023, effective 4 January 2024.

This Policy is in accordance with the statutory framework for the EYFS (effective from 4 January 2024). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Intent

At St. Martin's our curriculum aims to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually in order to fulfil their potential.

At St. Martin's Primary School and Preschool we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging learning opportunities.
- Promote independence from a young age to help children develop self care and confidence.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development and encourage choice and decision making, independence and self-confidence.
- Value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress from their own starting points.
- Build relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children's learning journey.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.
- Give all children the tools to communicate effectively by developing their language skills in a warm and welcoming environment.

Staffing

At St. Martin's we have 2 EYFS classes. Tiny Steps (our pre-school) has up to 23 children in a session from 2-4 years old and runs 2 sessions per day (morning and afternoon). Our Reception class has up to 30 children between 4 and 5 years old.

In both classes we adhere to the ratios set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework:

In Tiny Steps there is one adult for every 5 children between ages 2-3 and one adult for every 8 children aged 3-4. Children are organised into key worker groups.

Our Reception class is taught by a qualified teacher and, cohort dependant, at least 1 class TA.

Parents and Carers as Partners and the Wider Context of Working Together

At St. Martin's we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents/carers as highlighted in the Statutory Framework. We understand that parents/carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we value their contribution to their child's education. A positive partnership between School and home can have an equally positive impact on a child's learning and development.

At St. Martin's we encourage parents/carers to take an active role in their child's learning and development and ask that they participate in as many ways with the School as they can. We try to encourage regular information sharing to ensure that parents and school have the best knowledge available to help support and develop a child.

At St. Martin's we engage with parents/carers in the following ways:

- Teachers are available for an informal chat at the end of the day;
- Individual learning journeys posted on Seesaw;
- Reading Records;

- Parents' Evening twice a year;
- End of Year Report.

St. Martin's also works with a number of other organisations and services within its community to support its EYFS practice. This helps the School to meet the needs of the children in its care.

Learning and Development

At St. Martin's our EYFS Curriculum is designed to best prepare children for their ongoing learning journey into Ks1 and 2. It covers all areas of the EYFS Framework whilst also considering the specific foundational knowledge required for children to access our school's spiral curriculum from Year 1-6.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are important and interconnected.

The **3 prime areas** are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and forming relationships and thriving:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through **4 specific areas**:

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

Our yearly overview of learning outlines how we develop the 7 areas of learning throughout the year.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

In planning and guiding what children learn we reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust practice appropriately.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- ***playing and exploring*** - children investigate and experience things, they're encouraged to 'have a go'
- ***active learning*** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and are encouraged to enjoy achievements (however small they may be)
- ***creating and thinking critically*** - children have their own ideas and we encourage them to develop these ideas and make links between ideas, developing their own strategies for doing things.

Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents/carers and the School to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support.

Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

At St. Martin's we use Seesaw to record the children's progress over the academic year in all areas of learning and development in the EYFS Statutory Framework

When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement

Parents/carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. We invite parents/carers to attend a parents' evening on, at least, two occasions during the year and a report is sent to parents/carers at the end of the year.

Progress check at age two

When a child is aged between two and three, practitioners must review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime areas.

Beyond the prime areas, it is for practitioners to decide what the written summary should include, reflecting the development level and needs of the individual child.

The summary must:

- Highlight areas in which a child is progressing well.
- Highlight areas in which some additional support might be needed.
- Focus particularly on any areas where there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay, which may indicate a special educational need or disability.
- Describe the activities and strategies the provider intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns. This plan should involve parents and carers and other professionals (for example, the provider's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or health professionals) as appropriate

Ready for Reception Progress Tracker

At St. Martin's we also complete a 'Ready for Reception' progress tracker which is reported to the Local Authority. This takes place during the academic year before a child starts school in Reception.

Assessment at the Start of the Reception Year – the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts Reception. The RBA assesses a child in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. This is used to form the starting point for school progress measures. Scores are not shared or published. There is no expected standard and children cannot pass or fail.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS – the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, an EYFS Profile is completed for each child. Each child's development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The levels are assessed as:

- 1 - emerging;
- 2 - expected;
- A - unable to assess/exemption applies.

The EYFS Profile provides parents/carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against the early learning goals, expected levels and their readiness for Year 1. A copy of the Profile is provided to Year 1 teachers and parents/carers.

At St. Martin's we report on children's progress towards achieving GLD (Good Level of Development) to the Local Authority at 3 points through the year:

Baseline- October

Autumn- December

Spring- March

Inclusion and Equality

At St. Martin's we are committed to supporting the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in our care. We have created a welcoming environment that is both safe and stimulating allowing our pupils to learn and grow in confidence.

Where a child may have additional needs, the School's Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo) provides support and guidance and works with staff and parents/carers using the school's graduated approach to consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. The School looks to identify additional needs and provide additional support as early as possible so that the child gets the support that they need.

Transition

Prior to starting school, the Reception staff contact all preschool feeder settings and arranges to visit the settings if necessary. We hold a meeting for parents in the Summer term before their child starts school, this gives parents chance to meet their child's teacher and support staff and ask any questions. We go through our EYFS information booklet and talk about the arrangements for starting school. The children have a taster session, usually in June, before they start school in September. On starting school, the children come in for half days for the first few days and then begin full time shortly after that (usually the first full school week). When moving to Year 1 we liaise with their staff and discuss the children that are moving to them. During the Summer term, the children have opportunities to meet their new teachers and carry out activities both in the Reception classroom and the Year 1 classroom.