

Policy for:

EYFS Curriculum Policy



Committee: Curriculum and Standards

Document Control

A. Confidentiality Notice

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B. Document Details

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V3	1.12.2025	School	Curriculum & Standards 11.12.2025	Reviewed by Z Mallinson EYFS Phase leader – amends made throughout policy
V2	2.5.2024	School	Curriculum & Standards	Reviewed EYFS Phase Leader – reviewed against DfE Guidance Early years foundation stage statutory framework For group and school-based providers Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five effective from 4 th January 2024; latest KCSIE and Working together to Safeguard Children.
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St Modwen's EYFS policy

"When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow." (Development Matters 2020)

Mission statement

Excellence For All Through Jesus' Love

To aim high and achieve our God given potential as socially responsible citizens, loving one another as Jesus loves us.

Aims of the policy

The aim of this policy is to explain how early years children will be taught at St Modwen's. It will provide details of the content covered, statutory guidance, and the role for teachers and other adults working with the children. For the purpose of this policy, 'Early Years' refers to children in nursery and reception.

Intent

All children at St Modwen's have access to a wide range of exciting and inviting resources, both inside and outside in our large outdoor classroom, that will inspire them to challenge themselves and build on their prior learning. The environment is enhanced with activities linked to current and past learning for children to access independently and also with the support of adults. The children in early years at St Modwen's are happy, confident children who are reaching their full potential through enabling environments, positive relationships and the understanding that every child is a unique child and a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. The curriculum will celebrate diversity and support the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Those children with particular needs, including SEND, will be supported appropriately allowing them to be successful and all children will gain the skills, knowledge and understanding, as they start out on their educational journey, to enable them to progress from their individual starting points and so prepare them for the next stage of their education.

When you enter our Nursery and Reception classrooms you will see...

CREATIVITY

Every child has the opportunity to express their creativity and individuality through open-ended activities and access to a wide variety of quality resources.

CALM

A calm, purposeful environment where children are happy, safe, respectful and engaged in their learning.

COLLABORATION

Children are encouraged to work together to solve problems and share ideas. To respectfully challenge each other as well as to help each other when needed.

POSITIVITY

A nurturing environment surrounded by positivity where everyone is praised for their efforts and achievements.

INDEPENDENCE

Children are encouraged to explore and be curious in their learning. Setting their own challenges and building their resilience, becoming independent learners.

Implementation

Our curriculum is designed to ensure all children have the skills and knowledge to be successful learners as they progress through school. This is achieved through key questions children will be able to answer at the end of each topic and specific vocabulary that is explicitly taught. Exciting and challenging learning opportunities are planned based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals.

The reception classes work as a unit where all children have access to both classrooms and the outdoor environment throughout the day. The children can access a range of activities that meet all areas of the curriculum. Staff understand that all of areas of learning are inter-connected and none of the areas of learning are delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a range of learning areas and staff are skilled in identifying learning opportunities and how to ensure children make progress.

We plan a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities in order for children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three **Prime areas** are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Staff also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

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

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates and promotes the development of the three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning and all staff know the importance of children developing these learning skills:

Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to 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 ideas, 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.

Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Children will be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Teaching

At St Modwen's 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; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

At St Modwen's, we include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through child-initiated activities that we see how much of this learning children have understood and can apply independently.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. This looks quite different in the Nursery and Reception classes. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our topic work, maths, literacy, phonics, and stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc. The majority of the school day allows children to access the continuous provision in the classroom. The classrooms are well resourced with equipment to allow children to be independent learners and make decisions about what they would like to do and how they would like to achieve this. Staff will use a variety of strategies to support children and ensure they make progress whilst engaged in child-initiated activities.

At St Modwen's Catholic Primary School, we offer a curriculum which is broad and balanced that builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills of all children, whatever their starting points. We use the Development Matters document to ensure progression and track progress throughout the year.

The Early Years uses core texts as a basis for topic planning and usually start with an exciting hook to engage children in the topic. The texts for each topic are chosen for their level of challenge and quality language. They have also been chosen with a view to promoting reading for pleasure. To ensure children are exposed to a wide range of quality texts, learning is based on new books as well as a daily story time session where children vote for the book they would like to listen to. The classroom also provides a wide range of reading opportunities in many different areas of learning.

Developing language skills is key to ensuring children are successful in their future learning and so we have created a language rich environment in the Early Years. All staff understand the importance of good quality interactions and are skilled to ensure children make the progress they need through highly skilled questioning and modelling. At St Modwen's, in the Autumn and Spring term, Drawing Club is used to engage children in texts and encourage the development of their fine motor skills by drawing in readiness for writing. We also incorporate phonics skills into these lessons. In the Summer term, we begin to use the Talk for Writing scheme to support our literacy lessons.

Children develop their literacy skills by learning skills such as the imitation of stories that they learn using actions and story mapping techniques. Children also have opportunities to show independence in their writing by planning and writing their own stories and also writing for many different purposes. Literacy opportunities are also promoted in many of the continuous provision activities available to children during the week.

Phonics is taught daily using the Read, Write Inc programme and through the love of real books. Through stories and activities associated with these, phonic sounds are introduced to children each day in an engaging way. The phonics activities are revisited to embed over the year and supported in a range of ways including associating actions with these.

Maths lessons are carefully planned using concrete resources and build on prior learning and follow the White Rose Medium Term plans. We want our children to become confident mathematicians who can apply what they have learnt to real life experiences and have the knowledge and skills to be successful in Year 1.

Religious Education

R.E. is taught weekly in Reception. In addition to our R.E. lessons, we have class liturgies every week and join the rest of the school for assemblies. We follow the 'Learning and Growing as the People of God' scheme of work. Throughout the year we learn about and make comparisons between different faiths and their different celebrations.

SEND

All children are supported to reach their full potential. Through early identification of needs in our nursery and reception classes we can ensure extra support is available for those children who require it. Parents and carers will be informed of any concerns the class teacher may have about progress and will be informed of the extra support put in place.

Assessment and Observations

Ongoing assessment (formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process.

Observations include child-initiated tasks and teacher led activities in the inside and outside learning environments. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning.

On entry to Nursery and Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. Throughout the Early Years the class teacher submits end of term assessment data, which is internally moderated, showing each child's development across the different areas of learning. At the end of reception, the class teacher will assess each child against the Early Learning Goals. Parents will be informed as to whether their child is 'working towards' achieving the goals or whether they have achieved each Early Learning Goal. This information is communicated to parents and carers in the end of year report for all reception children.

Partnership with parents and carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore we strive to ensure that they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. A Parent information Evening is held in the Summer Term for parents of the new reception and nursery pupils. The objectives of this meeting are to disseminate important information, to encourage discussion and to emphasise the vital importance of home-school co-operation and mutual support. Two formal parents' evenings are held each year and the staff involved with the early years children are happy to meet with parents after school, on an informal basis or by appointment if necessary.

Safeguarding & Welfare

All staff plan their learning for pupils in this subject by adhering to the guidelines laid out in the current 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and Working Together to Safeguard Children. All staff are trained and told to adhere to the 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings'.

This Policy covers all offline and online activity by the same principles and is used in conjunction with our related policies for Equal Opportunities, Disability Access Arrangements, SEN and Inclusion, Racial Equality and Harassment, Catholic Life (including Prevent strategies and SMSC) and the school's Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct.

We take all medical accidents seriously and always log these using Arbor and inform parents of what has happened, in the case of a serious accident we will ring the parents/carers immediately. We encourage all children to start school without nappies but will support any children struggling with this. We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' (i.e. wet themselves!) and have stocks of spare clothes and change anyone who needs it. We ask parents to help keep our stocks of clothes high by returning anything their child has borrowed.