



## **St Modwen's EYFS policy**

**At St Modwen's we 'Achieve, Believe, Care'.**

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

*Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012*

For the purpose of this policy 'Early Years' refers to children in Nursery and Reception.

### Aims & Objectives

We aim 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 to their full potential.

Our aims are:

- To provide a structured, secure, caring and well-resourced learning environment which meets all the individual developmental needs of 'young learners'.
- To enable children to become confident, motivated and happy learners, developing the skills and attitudes necessary for their own successful future learning.
- To develop independence and individuality, whilst fostering respect and tolerance for others irrespective of ability, race, creed, gender or background.

### The Learning Environment

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed 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 where they can access a range of activities that meet all areas of the curriculum. All of the 7 areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

We plan a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most 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 will 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

All children should have access to and need:

- Adults who are sensitive to their differing needs, abilities, backgrounds and previous experiences to teach, support, care and offer equal opportunities for them all to develop.
- Adults who will respect them and value their ideas and opinions, acknowledging that every child is a competent learner from birth
- A challenging and diverse curriculum offering ample opportunity to practise and develop skills and learning. The curriculum should also offer opportunities for the development of personal qualities and social skills.
- Rich and positive learning experiences with plenty of first-hand experience, varied to include all learning styles, and including regular opportunities to explore and learn through practical and play activities.
- The chance to make decisions and to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour. This includes the chance to make mistakes in a forgiving environment and to realise that making mistakes is a learning experience.
- A well planned, carefully structured programme of academic and personal development, building on past experiences and achievements, delivered in ways appropriate to their age and stage.

**All Early Years staff at St Modwen's promote the Gospel Values (from the Sermon on the Mount, as witnessed in the Gospel according to St Matthew- The Beatitudes)**

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven"*

Values: **Faithfulness & Integrity**

*"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted"*

Values: **Dignity & Compassion**

*"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth"*

Values: **Humility & Gentleness**

*"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied"*

Values: **Truth & Justice**

*"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy"*

Values: **Forgiveness & Mercy**

*"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God"*

Values: **Purity & Holiness**

*"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God"*

Values: **Tolerance & Peace**

*"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of slander against you because of me. Be glad and rejoice for your reward is great in heaven; they persecuted the prophets before you in the very same way"*

Values: **Service & Sacrifice**

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

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 should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can 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.

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 taken on.

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...

### 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 and Mass. We follow the 'Learning and Growing as the People of God' scheme of work. Throughout the year we learn about different faiths and their different celebrations.

### 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.

Observations, samples of work and photographs are recorded in each child's 'Learning Journey.' 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 assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report.

### **Key person:**

The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Attachment provides a sense of security so that children can become confident, independent and capable young learners.

A key person is:

- A named member of staff who is the child's primary contact
- Someone to build relationships with the child and parents
- Someone who helps the child become familiar with the provision
- Someone who meets children's individual and care needs
- Someone who responds sensitively to children's feelings, ideas and behaviour
- The person who acts as a point of contact with parents

In Reception the key person is the class teacher whose role is to meet the needs of each child in his/ her care and respond sensitively to them, talking to and working in partnership with the child's parents/ guardians and the class teaching assistant. In Nursery, parents will be informed which Nursery staff member is their child's key person.

### Transition

Parents of new Reception Year pupils are invited to a meeting in the Summer Term and this is when admission arrangements, uniform and routines etc. are discussed. The children are invited into school during the Summer Term for taster mornings or afternoons. During these sessions the children meet their class teacher and teaching assistant and visit the classroom, both with their parents and on their own, giving them an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the staff and the environment. Children then join the Reception Year in September.

Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school assemblies and have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend time in their new class during the summer term.

Nursery children will also have many opportunities to meet Reception staff and help form positive relationships ready for their transition into Reception.

### Partnership with parents and carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure 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. As well as the Nursery and Reception visit days we offer workshops throughout the year so that parents can be involved in their child's learning. A Parent information Evening is held in the Summer Term for parents of the prospective Reception pupils. The objectives of this meeting are to disseminate important information, to encourage discussion and to emphasize 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

'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.'

*Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014*

We take all accidents seriously and always log accidents 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.

All staff plan their learning for pupils in this subject by adhering to the guidelines laid out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015'. 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 October 2015'

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 Positive Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct.