



LORETO PREPARATORY SCHOOL
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Registered Charity No. 250607

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Mission Statement

At Loreto Preparatory School
We are eager and inspired to do our best,
Meeting the challenges and opportunities of a changing world
With love in our hearts.

We are called to be joyful and prayerful,
Living the Gospel and the Catholic faith
And celebrating the values of Mary Ward
With our parents and the whole Loreto family.

Women in time to come will do much.
Mary Ward

This policy has been written with regard to and in the spirit of our school aims, in particular to enable children:

'To reach their full potential in all aspects of the curriculum.'

'To have a thirst for lifelong learning.'

'To have an understanding of the values of Mary Ward and their relevance to everyday life.'

'To feel secure and valued within a safe and well-maintained environment.'

'To be happy and confident and have a good sense of humour.'

'To have a good understanding of the world and to be adaptable to change.'

'To be honest citizens and make a contribution to society.'

'To be physically and mentally fit.'

'To be caring and appreciate and be sensitive to differences in others.'

This policy applies to after school provision and activities.

The EYFS Co-ordinator and EYFS Safeguarding Officer is Mrs Helen Thompson.
In her absence, Mrs Anna Beecroft is her deputy. All safeguarding concerns should be referred to Mrs Roberts.

AIM

The Early Years Foundation Stage team, in partnership with the whole staff, parents and carers, is wholeheartedly committed to providing a learning environment which engenders in the children a lifelong love of learning and develops each child to her full potential.

OBJECTIVES

- To support children in their learning through “teaching and experiences that give children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014)
- To provide an environment in which the children can work towards achieving the five outcomes outlined in ‘Every Child Matters: a Change for Children ‘
 - Staying Safe
 - Being Healthy
 - Enjoying and Achieving
 - Making a Positive Contribution
 - Achieving Economic Well-Being

THE EYFS IS BASED UPON FOUR OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Loreto Preparatory School 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 from staff and peers as well as stickers, the ‘Happiness Tree’ and our ‘Stars’ assemblies to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and all our children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. We recognise and celebrate the differences between our families.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that will most enable our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

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

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children about 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 wellbeing of all children with reference to current guidance including 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', SEAD and 'Sustained Shared Thinking and Emotional Wellbeing'. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy).

Positive Relationships

At Loreto Preparatory School 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.

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 play in educating the children. We do this by:

- engaging with parents about their child at our 'Year Ahead' evening in September
- asking parents to collaborate with the staff by providing information about their children's interests and aptitudes, and contributing on a regular basis to the 'Tapestry' online interactive tracking tool which records the child's learning journey
- offering parents daily opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Foundation Stage class (The EYFS opens to children and parents at 8.30 each morning.)
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns (There are formal meetings each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. The Key Person is present if the child is in the Nursery. Parents receive two written reports on their child's attainment and progress during each school year. For Reception children, the final report includes the EYFS Profile.)
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: sports day, charity fundraising days, parents visiting to share cultural knowledge, expertise, and so on.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. The EYFS teachers act as Key People to the Reception children, and the Teaching Assistants each have a group of Nursery children for which they are the Key Person.

Enabling Environments

At Loreto Preparatory School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and nurturing the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests,

development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS comprises long term and medium term plans which are based around topic work and our school schemes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning, however the teachers may alter these medium term plans in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children.

The children are assessed by observation on entry to the EYFS, followed by ongoing assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, phonics check-ups, and marking in accordance with the whole school marking policy. This involves the teachers and other staff as appropriate.

We use the 'Tapestry' online interactive tracking tool to record each child's level of development against the Early Learning Goals. During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. The Profile is informed by ongoing observation, relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and observations by any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs, and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Transition

If a child leaves during or on completion of the EYFS, a transition record of achievement with reference to Development Matters will be provided to the next school.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area. This is limited in size because of the geography of the building, however, the school has extensive grounds and gardens which are used regularly by the Foundation Stage under supervision. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

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."

At Loreto Preparatory School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014 and subsequent updates. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- 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 are 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

Health and Safety/Safeguarding

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2014, we undertake;

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Training is provided for staff 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. A written record (stored on the EYFS teacher's desk) is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day." (Statutory framework for EYFS 2014)
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times. The water fountains have hygienic mouth guards.
- We may occasionally provide a drink of fruit squash/water and/or a biscuit at events such as sports day. Children's dietary needs are recorded on the school management system and referred to when required. When children bring 'birthday sweets' for their friends, these are sent home for parental approval.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see accident and injury policy). A letter is sent home if there is a bump to the head. All staff are paediatric first aid trained.
- The whole school mobile phones and cameras policy states how these are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use.
- Staff are expected to wear clothing that supports them in getting to a child's level and playing and engaging with children at floor level.

Learning and Development

In the EYFS there are fully qualified class teachers and teaching assistants. Regular supervision meetings ensure consistency of practice and sharing of relevant information. There are specialist teachers for PE, ICT and music.

At Loreto Preparatory School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in KS1 and KS2. 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 opportunities provided for children to take part in sustained shared thinking
- 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

Pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities

Appropriate support is given to children with special educational needs or disabilities. The staff are made aware of these children through the SEND register. Resources are sourced and utilised to aid progress.

Play and Active Learning

Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. (EYFS Statutory Framework 2014)

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have 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 and develop their own style of active learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

AREAS OF LEARNING

The Three Prime Areas of Learning

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

The Four Specific Areas of Learning

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The head teacher and subject coordinator will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

The complaints procedure for the EYFS is described in the Complaints Policy.

Reviewed Summer 2017

Next Review Summer 2020