



The  
Pope Francis Catholic  
Multi Academy Company

# St Thomas More Catholic Primary School And Nursery

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# St Thomas More Catholic Primary School and Nursery

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Author / Reviewed by Headteacher & EYFS lead

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# Do all that you do with love.

This motto reminds of the powerful message rooted in scripture that actions, even the smallest, should be infused with love and compassion.

## **Our School Vision**

We believe every person is a unique creation made in the image and likeness of God, called by name with a special vocation and gifts to bring to the world. Our school is a family where we love one another as Jesus loves us, where we learn and share together, where we help others, and where we give our best to foster a safe community and sense of belonging.

## **Our school Mission**

We are inspired by Pope Francis, who said, “We must live the Faith, not only with our words but with our actions.” We are committed to nurturing compassionate, knowledgeable and active citizens of the future, who will have the confidence to serve others, using their gifts and talents for the common good.

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## 1. Introduction

Our Nursery classes and our Reception class are led by qualified practitioners who are passionate about caring for young children and their development. The philosophy of the setting is to provide a continuous, free-flow provision where every child feels welcome, safe and happy. We aim for children to become confident, self-motivated, independent and happy learners through their play and to make good progress in the early years' curriculum. Activities and experiences are planned around the seven areas of learning and are enhanced with children's interests and level of development in mind, as we appreciate that every child is unique.

Each child in our care is valued and loved as a child of God. We equally value parents and carers as their child's first educators and we will work closely with parents as their child settles and begins to learn.

## 2. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed to meet their Early Learning Goals and to make good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress ensuring that no child gets left behind.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equity, equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

## 3. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) for 2025.

- a) 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 foundations for children to fulfil their full potential.
- b) The 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 promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

- c) The EYFS is about what children learn, as well as how they learn. Effective practice is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other and through adult-guided learning.
- d) The EYFS seeks to provide:
  - Quality and consistency in all early years' settings ensuring that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
  - A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
  - Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
  - Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

#### Overarching principles

- e) Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years. These are:
  - 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 with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
  - Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.18). The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

#### 4. Structure of EYFS

We are delighted to offer places for 2-year-olds and 3-year-olds. They each have their dedicated areas and qualified staff to lead sessions in the mornings and afternoons. We comply with government requirements for staffing: pupil ratios and space per child.

The Nursery has its own double-classroom. We have a large outside garden with a climbing frame, mud kitchen, bike track, raised beds and a large wooden playhouse. Reception is situated in the Portacabin and has 2 rooms for learning and continuous provision. They share the same outside space as Nursery.

- Admissions – Children joining our nursery can join in the term after their second or third birthday. To comply with legislation, there is a cap on the number of children we can accept. Please see our Nursery Admission Policy. Reception has an intake of 30. Children moving from Nursery to Reception will be required to complete a school application form.

- Attendance – Children in Nursery are able to attend morning sessions between 08.45 and 11:55 and afternoon sessions begin at 12:15 and finish at 15.15. There is provision for lunchtime care, if the child is attending full time. Please see our Nursery Admissions Policy for costs. Reception falls under the school requirements, and the children begin the day at 8:45am and finish at 3:15pm. We believe attendance is essential to ensure consistent routines and learning. Please see our Attendance Policy.
- Uniform: Reception children are expected to comply with the school uniform policy.
- Packed lunches – Children in Nursery can bring packed lunches if they are staying until 12:15 or for the whole day. Children in Reception can bring packed lunches but are also entitled to free school meals. All packed lunches should try to be healthy, with only water to drink. As a school, it is our policy that children are not permitted to have products that contain nuts. This is because of allergies other children may have.
- Wrap around care. This is available to children in Reception. There is Breakfast Club which starts from 7:30am and runs until 8:45am and After School Club runs from 3:15pm – 5:15pm. There will be costs associated with wrap around care which will be determined at the annual review and published on the website.

## 5. Curriculum

5.1 At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School and Nursery, the early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework. This incorporates other experiences and opportunities which best meet the learning and developmental needs of the children. We believe that all children deserve an education rich in wonder and memorable experiences.

Our curriculum has been developed by subject leaders to ensure that there is clear progression of knowledge and skills from Nursery through to Year 6. Early Reading is a priority, and we use Little Wandle Letters and Sounds to teach Phonics from Nursery through to Year 2 and beyond for those that need additional support.

We have placed Reading at the heart of the curriculum, and we ensure that all of our pupils, no matter what their starting points are given the opportunity to learn to read as soon as possible.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected.

Three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- 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

### **5.2– Planning**

Our staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

### **5.3 Teaching**

Guiding principles -

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

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

## 6. Assessment

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School and Nursery, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning and next steps.

When a child is **aged between 2 and 3**, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a 2 Year Checklist and at the end of the year parents and/or carers receive a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

The adults spend much of their time observing the children and furthering their learning. We attach relevant assessments of the seven areas of learning and of the characteristics of effective learning and share these observations with parents using the Early Excellence

2 – year-olds – Pupil progress reports completed termly and continuously updated.

3 – year-olds - Each child is given three targets, tracked by their key person via Tapestry observations.

Reception - Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). Early Learning Goals (ELG) reviewed every 6 weeks for children on track, every 3 weeks for those not on track. Shared with TAs in a dedicated folder.

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

## 7. Working with parents and carers

Please note, it is a requirement for **each child to be assigned a key person**.

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

## **8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School and Nursery, we recognise that 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. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff: child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

- For children aged 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 5 children
- For children aged 3 and over: We have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children

For the reception class -

- We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils.
- We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required. In line with the EYFS Safer Eating Policy 2025 1 paediatric first aid (PFA) member of staff sits or stands facing the children whilst they are eating at all times.
- We promote good health in general, in the early years, as we follow a prescribed PSHE curriculum, in line with the rest of the school.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child safeguarding policy and the appendix of linked policies listed below.

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by EYFS lead, SLT and Headteacher every year to ensure updates to legislation are taken into account.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board and approved.

## Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Safeguarding policy OCC - KSCiE
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy

### School Policies

Behaviour Policy  
Teaching & Learning Policy  
Personal Care Policy  
Healthy Eating Policy  
EYFS statutory guidance  
Handwriting Policy  
Health & Safety Policy  
Uniform Policy