

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Introduction

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, the term Early Years relates to children in the Reception classes. We recognise that early childhood is an important stage in life. In our Early Years Foundation Stage, give children a variety of learning opportunities at a practical, experimental level. This is the building block for applying knowledge and understanding to the same experiences at a more abstract level in later years.

Aims

- To provide a secure and happy learning environment and through this a positive attitude to school life.
- To provide the stimulus and opportunities for children to become independent learners.
- To provide a broad, balanced curriculum appropriate to the age and ability of each child.
- To make the most efficient use of space, resources, and equipment.
- To foster in children an awareness of responsibility and respect for themselves and towards others.
- To help children develop an understanding of right and wrong.
- To help children develop and grow in an atmosphere of God's love.

Entitlement

Our Foundation Stage children follow: Early Years Foundation Stage framework based on the seven areas of learning. This provides a firm foundation for Year 1. The children will have access to this as and when they are ready, most notably in Literacy and Maths.

Content

Our curriculum is inspired by the children's interests as well as key events throughout the school year. These might include:

- My Family
- Seasonal Changes
- Transport
- Christmas
- Diwali

Aspects of key learning will be covered in the areas of Communication Language and Literacy, Problem Solving, Reasoning and Number, Physical Education and Religious Education using the following resources:

- New Development Matters: non-statutory curriculum guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DFES 2020).
- Twinkl Phonics Scheme
- White Rose Maths
- Life to the Full – Religious & Health Education Scheme in conjunction with the Catholic Directory

Play

Play is valued as an important part of the curriculum. It is an essential part of the learning process as it enables children to take control of their learning, to consolidate and unify their learning. Learning must be active.

“A child’s play is his work.” Tina Bruce.

Play enables children to:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| -discover | -develop language |
| -experiment | -concentrate |
| -invent | -use imagination |
| -learn new skills | -share and co-operate with others |
| -express ideas and fears | |

Resources

Each Reception class has a teacher and a learning support assistants. Parent helpers are welcomed and encouraged to support learning.

The classrooms are arranged so that all children have access to a variety of clearly labelled resources and equipment, which they can select independently. They are encouraged to take responsibility for keeping the environment tidy.

The outside classroom has a soft play surface, water, sand play, garden area, construction area, gross motor skills area, climbing wall, art area, maths area, a small world area, literacy area, storage sheds and a canopy.

Equal Opportunities

Every child will be given equal opportunity and encouragement in Early Years, irrespective of gender, race, and disability. For further clarification refer to our Inclusion Policy.

Additional Needs

All children are given equal opportunities to learn, and flourish based around their individual needs and starting points. All children are set high aspirations and staff work hard to ensure each child’s individual learning targets are met through adaptive teaching and key strategies. All children are given the support they need to flourish and grow.

Health and Safety

All children are taught safe ways of handling tools and equipment before being allowed to use them unsupervised. Risk assessments both indoors and outdoors are completed on a regular basis.

The front door to the Reception block will always be locked apart from when the children enter in the morning and are dismissed at home time. The children safely wait in the cloakroom area and are called by their teacher to go home when their adult comes to collect them.

Staff, students, and volunteers are prohibited from using their mobile phones during any teaching session.

Staff, students, and volunteers will never use their camera phones to take photographs of children in the school.

Parents are asked not to use their mobile phones in the classroom.

All photographs taken for assessment purposes will be done so on school owned cameras or school tablets for observation purposes and will remain the property of school. Permission should be received from all Parents/Guardians regarding the taking and publishing of pictures.

Assessment and Record Keeping

The Reception teachers carry out an Entry Baseline Assessments and End of Year Assessments for all children. Other informal assessments will go on as necessary.

A reading record will be kept for each child.

Photographs may be taken from time to time of activities and of constructions, models or artwork that need to be dismantled or taken home.

Musical compositions and physical education achievements may be recorded.

All necessary information will be passed on to the next teacher at the end of the school year.

Information Technology

Each class has one computer and an interactive whiteboard and uses relevant software as and when appropriate. Each classroom has access to three iPads which are used within continuous provision. Internet safety is taught on a termly basis.

Safer Sleeping and Rest

Children are not routinely expected to sleep during the school day. Where a child falls asleep or appears excessively tired, staff will ensure appropriate supervision, consider any medical or welfare needs, inform parents/carers as appropriate, and record concerns where a pattern emerges. Persistent sleepiness will be investigated in partnership with parents and relevant professionals.

What should staff do if a child falls asleep?

For a primary-aged child who unexpectedly falls asleep:

1. Ensure the child is safe and supervised.
2. Allow a short rest if the child appears unwell, exhausted or distressed.
3. Check for any medical conditions or medication that may cause drowsiness.
4. Inform parents/carers, particularly if this is unusual.
5. Record concerns if a pattern develops.
6. Consider safeguarding, welfare or medical referrals if sleepiness is frequent, prolonged or impacts learning.

Information for Parents

Pre-school meetings and visits are arranged both to inform parents and to put them at their ease in the school environment. An information pack is given for future reference. They are advised about ways to make the transition from home to school a happy one for both parents and pupils and on how to support their children's learning in the future. Each family has an opportunity to speak at length with the teacher at the beginning of the school year during home visits.

Two parents' evenings are arranged each year to discuss children's progress and teachers are always willing to answer queries at reasonable times. All the children's learning is recorded into a class learning journey journal or their own individual books. Parents receive a data synopsis three times a year, these outline each area of learning. An end of year report is written for each child towards the end of the summer term.

Review Date: September 2026
Next Review Date: September 2028