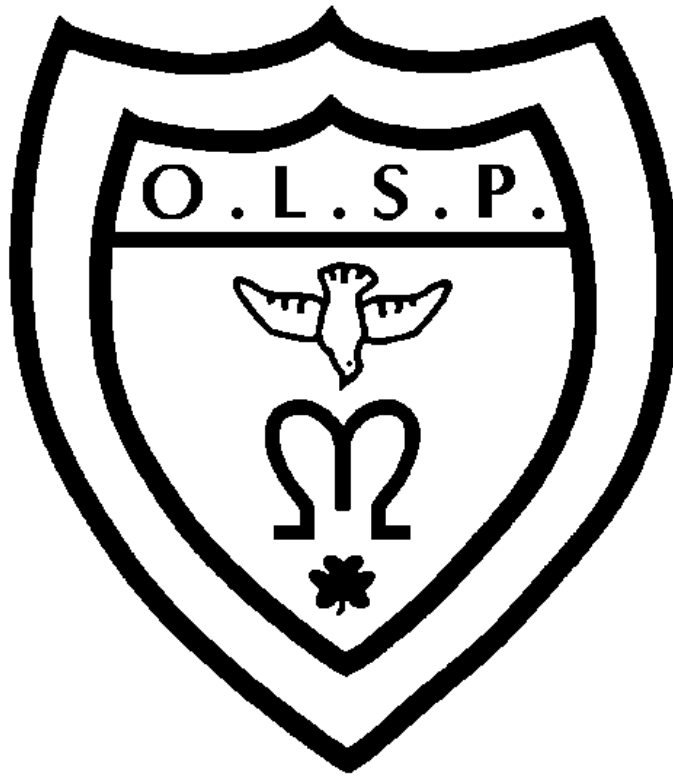


EYFS Policy



Our Lady and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School and Nursery

Policy Date:	September 2025
Review Date:	September 2026

The Early Years Foundation Stage

At Our Lady and St Patrick's we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (2021). Within this framework there are four guiding principles which shape our practice.

These are:

1. **Every child is a unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
3. 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.
4. Children **develop and learn at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in Early Years Provisions, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Aims

Our aims at Our Lady and St Patrick's are to:

- Provide an environment which is safe, secure and attractive, promoting the self worth and self-esteem of each child. Children will be encouraged to take risks and to know that making mistakes is an important part of the learning process.
- Encourage children to build relationships with others, by developing an understanding of themselves and the world around them.
- Provide relevant, motivating and challenging first-hand experiences, encouraging confident and positive learning attitudes.
- Promote independent learning, where children are encouraged to act upon their own thoughts and ideas and provide opportunities for the children to develop the characteristics of effective learning.
- Ensure that every child has equal and adequate access to the curriculum, and that each child's progress corresponds with their ability regardless of special needs/disability, gender, ethnicity or social background.
- Make the children's time in our early year's settings, a time for children to feel secure and happy, so that sound foundations of basic skills, knowledge and attitudes can provide a platform for future development.
- Establish effective home/'school' partnerships to further support the children's learning, valuing the crucial role played by parents / carers.
- Fully support the children in making the transition from nursery into Reception and then Reception into KS1.

Safeguarding

The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The school takes its child

protection responsibilities very seriously. This includes checking that all staff and volunteers who work with children are suitable to do so, keeping records about them and ensuring they have the right qualifications, training and skills and an up to date DBS check is essential.

We ensure all our Teaching Assistants have the relevant DBS checks, have at least a level two childcare qualification or higher.

Any concerns, which the school has, will be noted and, if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant agency. The full Safeguarding Policy is available in school for parents to read if they wish.

We have paediatric first aiders on site at all times.

Curriculum

The Early Years Framework sets the standards for learning from birth to five years old, we follow the strands set by this framework and concentrate the learning opportunities on the seven areas of learning. Which are as follows:

Prime Areas of Learning

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

Specific Areas of Learning

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive arts and Design

The areas of learning are particularly important for building the children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and supporting the development of their key skills. Our curriculum is delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities which support the development of the characteristics of effective learning. We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of our individual children taking into consideration their gender, special educational needs, ability, disability, cultural background or their first language. We plan activities based on the children's interests and starting points. The Early Years Team discuss observations, next steps and planning. Throughout their time in EYFS our children partake in an ambitious curriculum which is designed to ensure progress towards the end of reception goals. These goals are defined as Early Learning Goals (ELGs) ; the descriptors for these can be found in the appendix.

Phonics

The Foundation Stage follows the Read Write Inc phonics scheme.

Foundations for phonics in Nursery

In Nursery we provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy'.

These include:

- sharing high-quality stories and poems
- learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
- activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
- attention to high-quality language.

We ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception

We teach phonics for 45 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. We regularly review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.

Children make a strong start in Reception and teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.

We follow the *Read Write Inc* expectations of progress. Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.

British Values

At Our Lady and St Patrick's the teaching of British values is closely linked to the teaching of Personal Social and Emotional development and Knowledge and Understanding of the World skills. Within these areas the children are encouraged to learn about Democracy, The rule of law, Individual liberty, mutual respect and Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. At Our Lady and St Patrick's the children learn about different cultural and religious festivals, they make positive relationships with adults and children, they are encouraged to listen and respect each other's opinions.

Assessment

When the children start in reception they will complete the Reception Baseline (RBA) within their first six weeks. Throughout the year formative assessment will take place in the form of observations, samples of works, discussions with the child, the child's parents and other practitioners. Observations of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles are made by all of the teaching staff. This information is then used to: identify learning priorities, identify children's interests, plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child. The staff complete termly assessments and use them to track the children's progress, plan for the children's development and inform any intervention groups.

Role of the Early Years Leader

The Early Years Leader plays a critical role in ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning delivered in the Early Years is of a high standard. This is achieved by consistently adopting a reflective and critical approach to reviewing practice and a desire to continually improve.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The EYFS leader and Nursery Manager work closely together to ensure consistency between Nursery and Reception in terms of planning, teaching & learning, monitoring and evaluation.

On a continual basis, the EYFS team will reflect upon the teaching/learning experiences encountered, evaluating whether they are successfully meeting the children's needs. Performance Management is set in place for all the staff.

Role of Staff:

- Staff will use their knowledge of child development to plan appropriate ways to deliver the curriculum.
- Staff will liaise with colleagues and external agencies, such as health professionals, to ensure the sharing of information leading to more personalised next steps for the children as appropriate.
- Staff will monitor and report progress to parents through the use of school reports, online learning journals and parent's evenings.
- Staff carry out observations on the children throughout the year. Staff then use this information to plan the next steps for the children and incorporate activities based on the children's interests. The observations highlight links to the Characteristics of Learning. These characteristics are also reported to parents, in the children's end of year reports.
- Staff provide a link between Our Lady and St Patrick's and home. They play a critical role in ensuring that children make a positive transition into school and help them on the road to becoming happy and confident learners.
- A qualified member of staff supervises all the students and volunteers working in EYFS.

Parental Involvement

Our Lady and St Patrick's considers the education of children to be a partnership between home and school and encourages the involvement of parents in all aspects of school life. Parents share 'wow moments' and this is used to inform planning.

Transition

Transition between both Nursery and Reception and Reception and Year 1 take place in the summer term. The EYFS Leader ensures good communication and teamwork with both the Nursery Manager and Year 1 teachers to plan transitional activities. These include 'Meet the teacher' and planned collaborative sessions to ensure the children are familiar with their new teachers and learning environments. Meetings are held for parents to enable clear communications and answer any questions or concerns they may have.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies notably:

- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Appendix 1

The Early Learning Goal Descriptors

Communication and Language

ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

ELG: Speaking

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems when appropriate.
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

ELG: Self-Regulation

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

ELG: Managing Self

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience, and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet, and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

ELG: Building Relationships

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Physical Development

ELG: Gross Motor Skills

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others. - Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing; Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping, and climbing.

ELG: Fine Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery.
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Literacy

ELG: Comprehension

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems and during role-play.

ELG: Word Reading

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

ELG: Writing

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Mathematics

ELG: Number

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number.
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5.
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

ELG: Numerical Patterns

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system.
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity.
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Understanding the World

ELG: Past and Present

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society.
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

ELG: People, Culture and Communities

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and –when appropriate – maps.

ELG: The Natural World

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants.
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Expressive Arts and Design

ELG: Creating with Materials

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools, and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used.
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive

- Invent, adapt, and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher. - Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs; Perform songs, rhymes, poems, and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.