



Join the faith and learning journey



## St Antony's RC Primary School

### Foundation Stage

#### Mission Statement

St. Antony's School is part of the Roman Catholic community of the Holy Family, where Jesus Christ is our inspiration as we raise standards and aspirations for all of our children.

#### INCLUSION STATEMENT

In this school, we are educating our children to:

- know who they are - a special and unique gift from God
- know why they are here - we all have a purpose and responsibility to look after God's world
- Work hard and aim high for their future- find and use their God given talents to be what God intended them to be.

We are a Catholic community, in a modern society, where everyone is equal. The most loving and merciful Jesus Christ is our role model, and He welcomed everyone. All children are welcome in our school, and they and their families become part of our St. Antony's family. We will love and nurture them, and do our best to help them, on their faith and learning journeys, to become what God wants them to be.

Adopted by Governors: ..... (Signed on hard copy)

Date: .....

Review date:

## **POLICY INTENT**

Our Early Years curriculum is designed with the belief that children should be given strong foundations upon which they can continue to grow. We want the children in our EYFS to grow up with a good attitude toward learning and education while also developing their physical, verbal, cognitive and emotional skills. We are dedicated to enabling students, regardless of background, to explore their own beliefs and grow in their relationships in order to realise their full, unique potential. We firmly think that every child deserves to be respected as an individual. Keeping all of this in mind, we start every new year by assessing each child's unique needs and taking into consideration their various starting points. Then, with great care, we create a flexible Early Years Curriculum that allows children to follow their faith and learning journey at a pace appropriate for their individual needs and developmental stage.

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.”

Proverbs 22:6

## **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

Each pupil will receive a home visit and school taster session where teachers are able to gather valuable information regarding a child's starting point. Robust assessments will be used to assess their ability alongside any individual learning needs. Delivery of the Early Years Curriculum will be exciting and cater for all abilities through the continuous provision areas both inside and outside based upon challenging learning experiences. Children will receive high levels of speaking and listening experiences from highly experienced staff. Individualised interventions will take place to ensure that progress is made for all children and SENDS support will be used should a child have additional needs. Our Early Years Foundation stage works in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and children will work towards meeting the Early Learning Goal at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

### Foundation Stage

At St Antony's RC we aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which encourages children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experiences. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence. In Nursery and Reception, children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation through play.

### **Teaching and learning (Implementation)**

The EYFS Lead, Mrs Macneal with the support of SLT will be responsible for overseeing the planning, resourcing and monitoring of the school's EYFS programme. The subject matter covered in the Nursery and Reception class reflects the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Development Matters Curriculum, which came into effect during the Autumn term 2021. Special focus will be paid to the understanding of which age and stage a child is working at (Birth to 3, 3-4 years or Reception) and providing every opportunity to build their skills, throughout the EYFS in order to be best prepared for KS1 at St Antony's RC Primary School.

The EYFS programme will be delivered by staff using a broad range of metacognitive strategies in which adults will help children learn, including:

1. Thinking about thinking – monitoring our own thinking.
2. Knowing about knowing – being aware of what you know.
3. Cognitive self-management – planning, decision making, identifying problems and setting goals.
4. Emotional self-management – knowing how to control our own emotions, how to show empathy, etc.
5. Self-evaluation – evaluating our own performance.

### Staffing and Organisation

At St Antony's RC Primary School, we have a pre-school that holds 26 part-time morning sessions. Within the Nursery, there is one part-time teacher and 1 TA. The Nursery is also assisted by a Qualified EYFS teacher and Higher Level Teaching assistant who specialises in ELKLAN. We also have one Reception class supported by a TA support and an SSA qualified teachers.

### Safeguarding -

All staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding and refer to the school's safeguarding policy at all times. All placement students are given an induction meeting to discuss the safeguarding policy and given all the necessary information required for them to become a valued member of the team, they are directed to our school website to observe all policies. All parents, children and staff have a very detailed Induction process, home visit, induction meetings and induction sessions where safeguarding is of high priority. All parents within the EYFS follow the password system whereby they inform a member of staff of a password for their child, this ensures that no one can collect a child from school if they do not have the correct password.

### Starting Nursery

Children start Nursery at differing times throughout the year depending on places available. Children receive a home visit and attend transition days into the Nursery to become familiar with their new surroundings. The transition follows the same pattern as the Reception class.

### Starting Reception

Children begin the Reception class in the September of the school year in which they will be 5 years old. Children join St Antony's RC having attended one or more of the pre-schools and nurseries within our local area including our own school nursery. However, by attending our school nursery, children are not automatically offered a place in the Reception class and parents / carers must complete the Local Authorities application form. Please see our Admissions policy for more information. Our admission arrangements are carefully organised and regularly reviewed to ensure that all parties are happy, confident and fully informed about all aspects of induction. Each child will be assigned a key person and school will inform parents and/or carers of the name of the key person, and explain their role, when a child starts attending a setting.

For young children change and transition can be bewildering and overwhelming. We value the importance of a positive introduction to school for both child and parents/carers. We begin to meet new pupils and welcome families to St Antony's RC during the summer terms of the school year prior to entry. The children who attend our school Nursery class will already be familiar with the Reception class teacher and nursery nurse, however, towards the end of the Summer Term the children who have not been to our nursery will have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and experience some informal activities. Parents / carers will also have the opportunity to attend a meeting with all the Foundation Stage teachers and this will be led by the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator / class teacher. The children will start the Reception class on a full time basis at the start of September; however, this will be a staggered intake. During these times parent meetings will be held to allow parents to complete a variety of forms and discuss any issues or concerns with the class teacher.

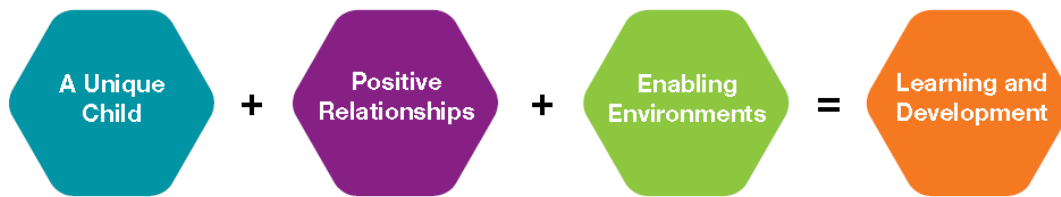
### **IMPACT**

**It is our aim that the EYFS framework at St. Antony's equips children with key knowledge and skills, as set out in the Early Learning Goals, but also to develop resilient, capable, confident and self-assured children.**

### Aims of the Foundation Stage

- To make each child's first experience of school happy and fun.
- To develop resilient, capable, confident and self-assured children.
- To provide a child friendly setting that is safe, stimulating and caring.
- To ensure that all children feel valued in the Foundation Stage setting.
- To develop children's confidence and independence to carry out daily tasks and to become independent learners.
- To offer a balance of child initiated and adult led activities.
- To provide a differentiated curriculum firmly based on children's needs, interests, skills and knowledge.
- To foster and develop a partnership between home and school in order to establish an accurate understanding of each child's individual needs. (Parents as partners)
- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential.
- To work within the guidelines of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:



### UNIQUE CHILD

At St Antony's RC we believe all children are special. We give all our children the opportunity to achieve their best by:

- Using a wide range of teaching strategies that include Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic learners
- Planning activities that take into account children's individual learning needs
- Using resources and materials that reflect the community that the children come from
- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued

### Inclusion

All children at St Antony's RC are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. We value the diversity of individuals within our school, as we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of the range of life experiences our children have when planning for their learning.

### Special Educational Needs

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. The class teacher will discuss these targets with the child's parents/guardians on a regular basis. We also ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of those children who have been identified as Gifted and Talented, extending their learning when appropriate.

The safety of our children is paramount at St Antony's RC. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits through our Prayers for Life and help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children are encouraged to take risks in order to aid their own learning, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

At St Antony's RC we:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote healthy eating and good oral hygiene.
- 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 is 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.

### POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

At St Antony's RC we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with children and their families. All staff involved within the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

### Parents as Partners

Parents are the first and most important educators of a child. We encourage their involvement in all aspects of learning and encourage a partnership based on mutual trust and respect by:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school.
- Operating an open door policy for parents with any queries.
- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents and valuing the ongoing contributions to this from parents.
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation evenings per year.
- Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress during their time in the Foundation stage.
- Developing a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents.
- Parents invited to stay and play sessions, chatter chums and ready steady school.

### **ENABLING ENVIRONMENT**

At St Antony's RC we provide a stimulating indoor and outdoor environment in both Nursery and Reception, offering experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable, so giving children the confidence to explore and learn in secure, safe spaces.

*Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems.*

'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'

The Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. The learning environment is divided into clearly defined areas including: role-play, reading garden, English table, Maths area, computer area, expressive arts area, malleable area, sand, water, construction, small world, storytelling area, gardening, creative and a PE area.

Children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the school day. The free flow between the inside and the outside has a positive effect on the children's development. We aim to ensure that the indoor and outdoor environment is suitable for learning and offers a range of opportunities and challenges for independent and supervised exploration and experiences.

### **LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Religious element permeates throughout the school day: in and out of the classroom, with the hope that the children will identify with and adopt such an attitude to life. We are committed to allowing pupils to explore their own faith and develop their relationship with God and what He wants them to be.

At St Antony's RC a carefully structured curriculum based on the Development Matters and Early Learning Goals through their ages and stages and offers provision that builds on the children's individual learning needs. Through play, children have the opportunity to explore, investigate, discover, repeat, revise and consolidate their knowledge, skills and understanding.

The EYFS is divided in to 7 areas of learning and development, all are important and interconnected however, 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.

These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

There are 4 *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are

- Literacy

- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

**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 and good oral hygiene.

**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.

**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. They will develop a love of reading, word reading, comprehension and writing.

**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 learn about number and numerical patterns.

**Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore people culture and communities, past and present and their natural world.

**Expressive arts and design** involves helping and supporting children in creating with materials and being imaginative and expressive.

*The development of children’s artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts*

‘Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’

At St Antony’s RC, we believe these seven areas depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. Children learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to provide opportunities that allow children to learn in the ways that best suit them ~ playing, talking, observing, investigating and problem solving, questioning, experimenting, testing, repeating, reflecting and responding to adults and each other. The curriculum is delivered through a combination of adult-led focussed learning and child-chosen/child-initiated activities. The learning may be delivered through a wide variety of activities aimed at the whole class, groups, pairs or individuals that take place both in and out of doors.

### Planning

We are guided by a Long Term Planning overview, Medium Term Plans and detailed weekly plans for cross-curricular topics to which the children are encouraged to add their own interests and focuses for learning which are shared on the school website. Where appropriate, the whole topic is pupil-initiated and led. Systematic planning ensures continuity and progression in the introduction and development of specific basic skills and concepts. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document.

## Assessment

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. Children in EYFS will be assessed according to what they know, understand & can do. Children will complete the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) when they enter school. Children will be assessed in a range of contexts. Day to day informal checking of what children can do in relation to prime and specific areas of learning, will then be used to inform future planning, including children's next steps. Staff will observe, discuss & record noteworthy achievements towards the ages & stages (Birth to 3, 3-4 years, Reception) and later Early Learning Goals. Assessment will be used to support the identification of any child who may be at risk of falling behind in order to plan for support to be put in place.

Target Tracker will be completed as this feeds in to the school Target Tracking system.

- At the end of the Nursery / Reception Year, information will be passed on to the next teacher giving them a detailed account on each child's abilities.
- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile data will be sent to the LA with an emerging or expected level of development against all 17 areas of the EYFS Profile.
- Baseline assessments of speaking and listening are also made using BPVS, ROSCo and WellComm. These assessments are used to support individual children according to language ability and interventions are put into place using Nursery Narrative and Derbyshire language scheme. Final assessments are made during the summer term and inform the Target Tracker assessments and the develop matters statements.
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## Reading & Phonics

At St Antony's we believe every child should have the opportunity to become an enthusiastic and independent reader. We want all children to have an interest in, and a love of, books and we want them to be attentive listeners and have a lifelong love of reading. In Reception, we do this through providing many opportunities for our children to access high quality up to date fiction and non-fiction books, plays, poetry anthologies, newspapers and magazines (See Reading Policy).

We want all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery and Reception and follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school (See Phonics Policy).

To protect both the children and practitioners, the EYFS follows a stringent **Child Protection Policy** (See individual Policy) the EYFS has two areas of legal requirements:

- **Supervision Welfare Requirements**
  - Safeguarding & promoting children's welfare
  - Suitable people, protection of staff with designated person (A Wildy) in which staff can disclose personal worries or concern. All staff have access to online telephone support service **Employee assistance programme with password**
  - Suitable premises
  - Environment & equipment
  - Organisation
  - Documentation
- **Learning & Development Requirements**
  - Early learning goals
  - Educational programmes
  - Assessment arrangements

EYFS practitioners are required to:

- Maintain standards
- Improve quality & consistency
- Provide equality of opportunity for all children
- Work in partnership with all settings attended by a child
- Work in partnership with other agencies involved in the child's welfare
- Work in partnership with the child's parents

## CONCLUSION

We aim to give St. Antony's children the best possible start to their school lives and beyond.

Reviewed May 2024

This policy will be reviewed every two years.