



# The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust

## EYFS Policy

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Version Number	Author	Purpose/Change	Date
0.1	R Suik		16.3.22
0.2	RSi	Updates from Jan 24 EYFS statutory framework	05.07.2024
0.3	RSi	KCSIE update Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage	22.04.2026

*This policy applies to all academies within the DCET*

# **The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust**

## **EYFS Policy**

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. In The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development, however we also believe early childhood is valid in itself, as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

### **1. Aims**

This policy aims to ensure:

- That we provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond
- That there is quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind. Every child is valued and their individual needs are assessed and used to inform next steps.
- That we provide opportunities for children to learn through, planned and purposeful play in all areas of learning and development. These opportunities enable choice and decision-making and foster independence and self-confidence.
- There are close partnerships working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

### **2. Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021 including the updates made in January 2024. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

### **3. Structure of the EYFS**

See school websites for local arrangements

### **4. Curriculum**

Each early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in Educational Programmes within the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021 and that they are following the guidance laid out in the January 2024 guidance (School based provision). The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, 3 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.

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum are the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- active learning – children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements
- creating and thinking critically – we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing this.

## **5. Planning**

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.

## **6. Teaching**

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.

## **7. The environment**

We aim to create attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environments which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. We also aim to make our environments places where children feel secure and confident and are challenged to develop their independence. Activities are planned for both the inside and outside; children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the school day.

## **8. Assessment**

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the 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. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

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')

Practitioners are not required to prove this through collection of any physical evidence but will be able to reflect on 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 must be submitted to the local authority who return this data to the relevant government department

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## **9. Working with parents**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is 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.

We use a variety of systems to make sure that parents are aware of the progress their children are making and sharing key steps in their learning.

## **10. Safeguarding and welfare**

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in the safeguarding policy

In addition this policy has been updated in line with statutory safeguarding guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2025), *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, and the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children remains a fundamental priority within the EYFS.

Specific guidance:

- During snack and meal times there will be a paediatric first aider on duty
- All EYFS staff receive safeguarding and child protection training on induction and at regular intervals thereafter. Staff understand how to recognise signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and are clear on procedures for reporting concerns immediately to the DSL. Safeguarding is recognised as everyone's responsibility.
- The EYFS promotes a safe, nurturing environment where children feel secure and listened to. Staff build trusting relationships and support children to express concerns in an age-appropriate manner. Safeguarding is embedded within daily practice and the EYFS curriculum.