



St Agnes ACE Academy

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Principles and aims of our Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage begins at birth and continues until the end of the Reception year. We recognise it as a crucial stage in education, both in its own right and in preparing children for learning in Key Stage One. We believe that all children should be given the best possible start to their education. We therefore place great value on the quality of our provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We aim to:

- Foster positive attitudes to learning including confidence, curiosity, responsibility and independence.
- Promote an inclusive ethos and approach to learning for all our children to ensure that none are excluded or disadvantaged.
- Provide children with a well-planned curriculum which fosters enthusiasm for learning and is challenging and progressive within a stimulating environment.
- Develop children's knowledge, understanding and skills in all areas of learning through first hand experiences.
- Provide opportunities for children to make choices and become independent in their learning in a variety of safe and stimulating environments both in and outdoors.
- Establish and maintain a close partnership with parents/ carers, families and preschool providers in our community.
- Use focussed assessment and record keeping based on direct observation of children and discussion with them. To use this to inform future planning, monitor progress and build on children's prior learning.

Admission Arrangements

Our school follows the Cornwall Primary School Admission Arrangements as set out in the annual admissions booklet, 'How to Apply for a Place in a Reception Class in a Cornish Primary School', given to the parents of prospective pupils in the autumn term.

All children begin school on a full time basis. At parents' request, the possibility of starting part time can be discussed with the Reception class teacher and the Headteacher. Arrangements for children settling into school are flexible so that children have the time to feel settled and secure in their new environment. Parental involvement is valued and welcomed with plenty of opportunities for cooperation and collaboration.

St Agnes Pre-school moved to the school site in January 2011, allowing a closer involvement with them which helps children to be admitted happily into the school environment.

Starting School

- **Looking Around the School**

New parents are very welcome to book an appointment to look around the school with the Head teacher prior to admission.

- **Preschool visits**

Throughout the summer term the EYFS Team Leader will visit local pre-school settings to see the children in a familiar environment before Learning Together commences.

- **Learning Together**

Children are offered the chance to attend Learning Together sessions during the summer term prior to entering school. This is a chance for the children to explore the classroom without their parents and to meet the EYFS team. Two members of the attached pre-school staff stay to allow a smooth transition from one setting to another.

- **Parents' Information Meeting**

We hold a Parents Information Meeting session prior to admission to explain school life, routines, teaching and learning and assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- **Home Visits**

We offer home visits to every child, during which the Reception class teachers visit the child in their own home. This provides a great opportunity for parents to voice any worries or personal information concerning their child. Staff can chat with the parent and child and fill in a Starting School information sheet.

Resources

We review our resources annually to ensure that they are:

- Suitable to meet the needs of the children
- In a safe and clean condition for use
- Appropriate for all seven areas of learning

Staffing and Organisation

Our Reception classes are taught by two teachers with an Early Years qualification and/ or experience. In addition, each class has a well-qualified support assistant on a full time basis. We also welcome parental help on trips and visits.

We believe strongly in the importance of keeping our practice up to date. We therefore ensure that all staff working in the Early Years Foundation Stage attend courses and training on a regular basis as part of our school Professional Development Programme.

Curriculum

Our core reference document is the QCA 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' which includes the principles for good practice which underpin our provision at this school.

Our planning is clearly structured and firmly established within a framework for long, medium and short term and is based on child led topics. The objectives and programmes of teaching and learning in the 'Read, Write, Inc.' phonics programme are also incorporated into our planning. This ensures high expectations and standards for our children. The curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning:

3 prime areas

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

And 4 specific areas

- Mathematical development
- Literacy
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Although the seven areas of learning form the framework for our planning, we know that children's learning is not divided into distinct areas. Often, one experience helps a child to develop a range of new skills and concepts across several areas of learning and our planning reflects this.

We encourage parents to become actively involved in their children's learning by sharing curriculum information with them on a termly basis, regular newsletters and giving them plenty of opportunities to share information, experiences, concerns and resources with us. We encourage parents to contribute to their child's learning journey through observations and two way dialogue.

Learning and Teaching

We believe that our children learn best by being actively involved in activities, through first hand experiences using all of their senses. We therefore provide a range of activities which are interesting, enjoyable, challenging and fun! Through these we encourage our children to explore, experiment, question, investigate, discover, create, practise and consolidate their developing understanding, knowledge and skills.

We firmly believe that if children are excited and motivated by learning, especially in the early days at our school, then we are already helping them to become lifelong learners. We recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

Play

Play underpins the delivery of all the Early Years Foundation Stage. We therefore ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to play in a secure environment with caring adults. We use the classroom and our outdoor area to enable children to access both planned, structured play activities and self-initiated, spontaneous play activities.

Assessment

Our assessment of pupil progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage is based on regular and close observations as well as questioning, listening and discussion with individual children. Combining this with observation of activities the children have completed, we are able to make professional judgements about what children have learnt. We involve all adults who come into contact with the child and regard parents as especially important in this respect. We therefore want to ensure that parents are able to contribute to the assessment process through an ongoing two way dialogue.

On entry to school we make initial assessments of what children already know, understand and can do. On a regular basis we track each child progress against the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and record observations and significant achievements which can be found in the child's Learning Journey. During the school year we hold Parents' Consultations with an appointment system as well as opportunities for informal discussions between home and school. At the end of the year in the summer term, we give the parents a written report which shares information about their child's attainment in the seven areas of learning.

During the summer term, each child's achievements within the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile are summarised and data submitted to the Local Authority as part of statutory assessment.

Meeting Individual Needs

We provide a safe and supportive learning environment at our school where the contribution of all children is valued. We also employ a wide range of teaching and learning strategies based on children's experiences, interests, skills and learning needs. In particular we plan carefully to meet the needs of:

- Boys and girls
- Children with special educational needs
- Children with disabilities
- Children from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Children of different ethnic groups including travellers and refugees
- Children from diverse linguistic backgrounds

In addition, we select our resources, equipment and materials thoughtfully choosing those which positively reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.

Partnership with Parents

We work hard to promote a successful partnership with parents with a two way flow of knowledge, information and expertise. Examples include:

- Discussions with Head teacher and Reception class staff prior to seeking admission
- Home visits prior to admission
- Parents' views and knowledge about their own child are listened to e.g. on admission, arrangements for formal/informal consultations
- Parents are given clear information about the school e.g. prospectus, policies, newsletters, displays, meetings, workshops etc.
- Entry profile to which parents contribute
- Parents Information meeting where staff explain routines and philosophy and parents receive a copy of the school prospectus
- Open door policy- share concerns early
- Parents accompany their child into the classroom at the start of each day
- Sharing children's records with parents
- PTA
- Parents and other family members are encouraged to support their child's learning e.g.
 - Learning together programme
 - Sharing reading books
 - Visits and celebrations
 - Postcards and books about holidays etc.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy forms part of our annual school self-evaluation process and will therefore be incorporated into our School Development/ Improvement Plan as appropriate.

Policy adopted by staff:

Policy adopted by governors:

Date for review: