



St John's Church of England Academy



Belonging Believing Becoming

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date of Review: February 2020

Date of Next Review: February 2021

Responsible Group: LGB

Belonging

Perseverance

Respect

Forgiveness

Truth

Aspiration



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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1.Statement of intent

At St. John's Church of England Academy, we greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- Quality and consistency, so that every child makes good progress from their starting points and no child gets left behind.
- A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- Partnership working between practitioners and parents.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

2. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The GDPR Data Protection Act 2018

This policy has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2017) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- DfE (2019) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working together to safeguard children'
- DfE (2015) 'The prevent duty'

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy. The EYFS lead, in conjunction with the headteacher, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.

4.Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- Work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

Four guiding principles shape our practice:

- **Unique Child** - Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** -Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling Environments** - Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between the school and parents.
- **Learning and Development** - Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. Starting points need to be taken into account and then built upon.

To put these principles into practice, St John's C of E Academy:

- Provides a balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Works in partnership with parents.
- Plans challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
- Provides a safe and secure learning environment.

5.Learning and development

The EYFS curriculum is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development.

In partnership with parents, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two sections – prime and specific; however, all the sections are interconnected and important.

The seven Areas of Learning and Development across EYFS are as follow:

Prime Areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Crucial for all aspects of life which will give the children the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning. Each child needs a positive sense of him/herself and respect for others.

Communication and Language- concentrates on listening and attention, understanding and speaking. Children are given opportunities to experience a rich language environment.

Physical Development –we provide opportunities for young children to be active and inter-active. This develops their control, coordination and movement. It helps children to gain confidence and feel positive about being healthy and active. This promotes a positive feeling of well-being and helps children understand the importance of exercise and healthy eating.

Specific areas

Literacy- children are encouraged to link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. Children are given a wide range of reading materials to foster a love of reading.

Mathematics- children are given opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers. They will calculate simple addition and subtraction problems and describe shape, space and measures.

Understanding The World – Crucial knowledge, skills, problem solving, exploring and understanding help them to make sense of the world. Foundations are developed for Science, Design and Technology, History, Geography and Computing.

Expressive Arts and Design – children explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. Children share their thoughts and experiences through art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative activities.

Spoken Language and Oracy

At St. John's Church of England Academy we recognise the need for specific Oracy work to develop and extend our children's skills. On entry data tells us the Prime Areas of Learning need securing before more specific learning can take place. We know that children will be better writers if they can construct verbal sentences effectively and these can then be built up to tell stories, recount events and inform the listener/reader. We use Story Scribing at various points in the year as well as using the Story Making process as part of the whole school to develop Oracy skills through the stages of imitation, innovation and invention, where appropriate. Makaton is used as part of our daily routines and in specific teaching to support all children in effectively communicating.

Philosophy for Children

P4C is introduced in EYFS to children in line with our whole school approach. In EYFS we explore the children to the 4Cs (Creative thinking, Collaborative thinking, Caring thinking and Critical thinking). Pupils are given opportunities to use thinking skills that they have developed in P4C sessions to challenge what they already know and explore more complex ideas further. This is linked with the adults encouraging children to ask questions, suggest answers and possibilities to questions and wondering/ thinking aloud. All of these are modelled by the adults through daily interactions as well as some specific P4C sessions.

Activities and curriculum coverage are planned to reflect children's interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.

Each area of learning and development will be implemented through a mix of adult-led and pupil-initiated activity. We respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through friendly and positive interactions.

6.Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are implicit in all children's learning and development. Through practitioner observations, the characteristics a child displays are noted and opportunities to develop them further inform future planning and provision in order to support the child to become an effective and motivated learner. Through a child centred approach, we provide opportunities for children to learn actively through play and exploration, to follow their own interests within a creative and thought-provoking environment, to develop their creativity and critical thinking skills.

- Playing and Exploring – do they investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'?
- Learning Actively – do they concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements?
- Creating and Thinking Critically – do they have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

7.The learning environment and outdoor spaces

The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment.

Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and daily outdoor activities are planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.

As part of the wider school grounds there is access to:

- School hall
- Library
- Amphitheatre
- Extensive grass grounds including Forest School area
- KS1 and KS2 playgrounds (concrete)

The local community provides opportunities to take learning outside of the school context. For example:

- Local park
- Town centre
- Local tourist attractions such as Puzzle Wood, Perrygrove Railway, Clearwell Caves, farm parks etc

8.The role of the adult

Our aim is to ensure that highly effective learning takes place in an environment that is safe, secure and offers opportunity for enjoyment and positive relationships. We believe this is nurtured when expectations are high, we celebrate individuality, self-esteem is high and positive attitudes are modelled and fostered. A child's 'sense of self' is based upon equality of opportunity, kindness, patience, dependability and trust modelled by and shared with the adults in school. Purposeful and respectful relationships between adult/child are paramount to the effective work within the EYFS

“Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all the areas of learning and development.”

(Revised EYFS)

Practitioners provide opportunities for the children...

- to take risks
- to investigate through first-hand experience
- to explore and create
- to talk
- take responsibility
- make decisions and choices
- express opinion
- make judgements

- question and hypothesise
- test and conclude
- to rehearse, consolidate and apply previous learning
- to build on prior learning and understanding

OFSTED – September 2015:

*“Teaching should not be taken to imply a ‘top down’ or formal way of working. It is a broad term that covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities: **communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges.** It takes account of the equipment adults provide and the attention given to the physical environment, as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations”*

Within the EYFS practitioners will be:

- Observing learning and documenting it against the Development Matters/ELGs using Tapestry (Online Learning Journey)
- Interacting with a child/ren to observe, assess, plan for, and respond to, that individual child.
- Delivering planned adult led learning with the whole class/ small groups/ individual children
- Supporting and developing child initiated learning with small groups/individual children
- Commenting, pondering and wondering alongside the child/re as well as asking them questions about their learning and observations
- Encouraging, motivating and supporting the children to develop specific skills, knowledge and understanding
- Providing a safe and purposeful environment where the children are encouraged to take risks and solve problems both child initiated and adult led
- Working 1:1 with children to address and support specific needs

9.Inclusion

All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender.

The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

The Equal Opportunities Policy ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible.

SEND in the EYFS will be monitored and managed by the school's SENCO.

The EYFS lead will discuss any cause for concern in a child's progress, especially in the prime areas of learning, with the child's parents. A strategy of support will be agreed upon and consideration will be taken as to whether the child may have a special educational need or disability which requires additional support. The school SEND Co-ordinator will become involved at this point

The school takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with EAL to use their home language in play and learning whilst also ensuring that these children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English. During assessment, if a child is found to not have a strong grasp on English, the EYFS lead will contact the child's parents to establish their home language skills to assess if there is cause for concern about a language delay.

10.Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.

Parents will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and the EYFS lead will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents.

Baseline Assessments:

- When a child starts Reception, observations are made and informal assessments completed with the children to establish their baseline point. This is matched to the stages of Development Matters and tracked throughout EYFS each term.
- As part of our Reception baseline assessments we undertake the National Reception Baseline (pilot 2019 and statutory from 2020) to assess Maths and Communication, Language and Literacy. These are completed in the September that a child starts Reception and are used alongside teacher baselines.
- Baseline assessments are moderated internally and within the cluster. Where possible, an external moderation takes place at the beginning of October to validate 'on entry' data.

Formative Assessments:

- Interim judgements are made termly for each child using observational assessments, pedagogic knowledge and the views and voices of all stakeholders.
- Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's Learning Journeys.
- Observational Assessment is used to capture formative assessment; assessments are made using informal and formal methods and reflect the child's current attainment, their interests and Characteristics of Effective Learning and linked to Development Matters. This is used to inform subsequent adult led activities and opportunities.
- Moderation of judgements is conducted in house and externally at planned points in the year.
- Data is analysed throughout the year to inform provision, areas of development and practice.
- Pupil progress meetings take place throughout the year with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) where we discuss the children's progress and identify those children who are at risk of delay. Intervention groups will be formed to support those children.

Summative Assessments:

- Reception children's final assessments are completed in May/June of each year through the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Children are judged as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding against the 17 Early Learning Goals. The profile results are then sent to the Gloucestershire Local Authority.
- End of year data is analysed and informs the next year's areas for development and action plans across the EYFS.
- The profile data is discussed with the Year One teacher so that s/he can continue to help the children to achieve the early learning goals if they have not done so, before they can access the Year One National Curriculum.

11.Safeguarding and welfare

All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well.

Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

The DSL are Pam Howell (Headteacher) and Joanne Peaper (Deputy Headteacher.)

The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate.

The DSL and will undertake child protection training as required.

Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect.

12. Parental involvement:

At St John's Church of England Academy we feel that establishing a positive partnership with our parents / carers is vital. We value the parental role of "first educator" and seek to work with parents / carers for the good of each child in the following ways:

- We operate an Open Door policy.
- We share Curriculum Planners to inform parents / carers of termly themes and contexts for future teaching and learning.
- We offer Curriculum Evenings to inform parents and carers about aspects of their child's education and how they can support them at home.
- Parents / Carers are invited to 'Learning Together' sessions.
- Parents / Carers are invited to contribute to their child's Online Learning Journey which is made available to them free of charge and via an app/website.
- The school prospectus is available on the school website and the class pages keep parents/carers up to date with in class learning and experiences.
- We offer a personalised 'Induction session' – an informal event for parents to meet with key staff in the Reception class and to share the school routines, expectations and philosophy..
- Individual parent and child consultation and Home Visit discussion prior to admission.
- Parents' Information Notices displayed at the on classroom window as well as published on the website, school Facebook page, the website and on online Learning Journey.

13. Transition periods and Induction Arrangements

EYFS induction and transition arrangements vary according to the needs of each individual cohort

Prior to September:

- In term 6 all parents/carers are invited to attend a 'New Parents' meeting where key members of staff share information about the Early Years Foundation Stage, starting school and the pastoral facilities available within the school.
- Home Visits are conducted throughout term 6 by EYFS staff.
- Practitioners visit feeder pre-schools to introduce themselves and make relationships with children who will be starting school in September.
- In term 6 pre-school pupils attend transition sessions in school in order to meet practitioners who will be caring for and teaching them in September and to become familiar with their learning environment.
- Practitioners visit feeder pre-schools to look at Transition Records and meet with the Key Worker.

Reception Class Admissions

Arrangements vary from year to year according to the needs of the cohort, the number of feeder pre-school settings and the staffing for each academic year.

Typically children are admitted cumulatively to their class in groups:

Week 1 – Children attend 8:45am – 12:00pm

Week 2 – Children attend 8:45am – 1:30pm (stay for lunch)

Week 3 onwards - Children attend full days 8:45 am – 3:15pm

We respect the individuality of our pupils and their needs when starting school. We also acknowledge that many of them have been in full time/long day child care for their pre-school year and before.

We aim to steadily introduce pupils to a longer working day, and have full time attendance within a maximum of 6 weeks. However, we know that some pupils have particular needs and can find the start of school extremely tiring. In this case we will personalise induction to the needs of the child by close consultation between home and school. Our admission number is 30; when classes are split, they are done so by the child's age / birth date. See separate Admissions policy.

Transition to Year 1

To ensure children's successful transition to Year 1:

- Children meet the Year 1 teacher and spend time in the Year 1 classroom (both formally through 'Transition morning' and informally)
- Year 1 teacher meets the children and spends time in the Reception classroom including for story times
- Learning opportunities are planned for EYFS children to learn with/alongside Year 1 children to become familiar with the adults and expectations of Year 1
- Data is shared by EYFS staff and Year 1 staff including end of year assessments.
- Copies of the EYFS end of year reports for each child are shared with the Year 1 teacher.

14. Health and Safety

See separate Health and Safety Policy

15. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the EYFS Lead and shared with the governing board and the headteacher.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is February 2021.

Susannah Griffiths

EYFS Lead