



Foundation Stage Policy

St. Andrew's C of E Primary School

February 2017

ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR EARLY YEARS EDUCATION

The Early Years Foundation Stage:

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a distinct stage of learning which sets standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five years.

At St. Andrew's school we aim to provide quality learning experiences for all children, in a Christian setting. Learning is structured, balanced, relevant to the child and related to the real world.

The EYFS has four overriding principles, each of which is then broken down into four 'commitments' describing how the principles can be put into practice. These are as follows;

A Unique Child- recognises that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. The commitments are focused around; development, inclusion, and health and well-being.

Positive Relationships- describes how children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person in their lives. The commitments are focused around; respect, partnership with parents/families, supporting learning, and the role of the key person in the setting.

Enabling Environments- explains that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. The commitments are focused around; observation, assessment and planning, support for every child, the learning environment, and the wider context – transitions, continuity, and multi-agency working.

Learning and Development- recognises that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates and that all areas of learning are equally important and inter-connected.

This policy outlines our early years provision in relation to the 4 principles.

The Purpose and Aims of the EYFS:

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their full potential. A child's experiences in the early years, has a major impact on their future life chances and opportunities. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to enable young children to stay safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to their own and others lives and achieve economic well being.

At St. Andrew's we aim to build upon what the child already knows from their home experiences and work with families to ensure that every child makes progress, regardless of their abilities, and is included in all aspects of school life, whatever their religious, cultural or ethnic backgrounds.

EYFS at St. Andrew's School:

At St. Andrew's Primary School we offer the same care and opportunities for learning to children aged between 3 and 5, we currently hold places for morning and afternoon sessions in a Nursery class, called the 'Bumble Bees' and two full time Reception classes, called the 'Caterpillars' and 'Dragonflies'.

All children on entry to EYFS are offered a home visit, details of when the children can start, plus a school brochure are given during the home visit. There is an "All About Me" booklet (See Appendix), which is filled in by the parent/carer and should be handed to the class teacher when children start. An additional booklet entitled 'My Activity Book' (See Appendix) will also be supplied, which should be filled in by the child with the support from their parent/carer. If the child's parent/carer does not wish to partake in a home visit, these details and booklets shall be sent to their home.

The Nursery morning and afternoon groups, for the September intake are determined by age, with the youngest children attending in the morning and the oldest in the afternoon. When a child moves to Reception, the classes are of mixed age and allocated by the Nursery Teacher.

Planning and Provision

The Foundation Stage outlines 7 areas of learning with 3 classified as 'Prime Areas' and 4 as 'Specific Areas'. The 'Prime Areas' are essential to support and aid the development of the 'Specific Areas'. We ensure that every child is given the opportunity to reach their full potential in all areas of learning, these are listed below:

Prime Areas of Learning: Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED), Communication and Language (C&L) and Physical Development (PD).

Specific Areas of Learning: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World (UW) and Expressive Arts and Design (EA&D).

Most areas of provision provide varied opportunities for children to make progress across the seven areas of learning. However, each area is particularly supportive of children's development within two or three key areas of learning. We make medium term plans which are loosely based on themes related to seasons and celebrations throughout the year. We try to capture the interests of the children through careful planning and regular discussions with children during key person circle times. For each new topic we also send out a questionnaire to capture children's interests and use this to support our future planning. Home learning books contain an overview of the child's learning from the past week at school so that parents can continue to develop their child's learning at home if they wish. We also have short term plans which include focused activities which have a specific learning outcome.

Teaching and Learning:

Our Foundation Stage recognises that play underpins every aspect of our teaching and learning and in accordance with the guidelines from the EYFS curriculum; we ensure that all our children have continuous opportunities to play both indoors and outdoors. The value of play, to enhance learning and development, cannot be over estimated. For young children play is spontaneous and it is through such activity that children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally.

Throughout our Foundation Stage we offer children the opportunity to extend and promote their own learning through activities of their choosing. In this way children can actively explore and investigate at their own pace, and through talk and positive modelling, adult support can challenge and extend the children's existing knowledge and conceptual understanding.

We employ a variety of teaching strategies to ensure that individual learning styles are met and we use resources and techniques which engage the children in listening, speaking, looking and doing. Carpet sessions are short, well paced, interesting and fun. We encourage and celebrate interaction between children and staff, enabling positive relationships to form. Whilst respecting all religious, cultural and ethnic diversities within the school, we are also keen to promote British values through our general curriculum and PSED.

Monitoring Progress and Reporting Assessment

At the beginning of Nursery the children are assessed by their teacher. This, combined with the next steps already identified during home visits, ensure that the children begin making progress as soon as they arrive in school. Reception, children are assessed for certain subjects and their levels determined by the class Teacher, this is called 'Baseline'. This information is used by the school for comparison to the Nursery information and the Department for Education (DfE) as a starting point to monitor a child's progress to Year 6.

During the Autumn Term, we offer parent consultations to discuss a child's well-being, adjustment to school life and areas of strength or weakness identified in Baseline assessments. In the Spring and Summer Terms we then offer 'Focus Child Meetings', which provide a more detailed look at a child's achievements and discuss next steps in learning.

Each child is assigned a 'Key Person'; this person is a member of staff in their class and should be the child's and their parent's/carer's immediate contact. Each child then has the opportunity to bond and develop in confidence with a significant adult. Each 'Key Person' is directly responsible for the well-being of the children in their group. By having closer interactions with the children, the 'Key Person' will have input into assessment. Ultimately the class Teacher will oversee all children's welfare and check assessment levels are accurate. We aim to include a 'circle time' once a day to allow children to contribute their thoughts and feelings regarding situations which have occurred and input into future planning.

Each child will have an online learning journal using a system called Tapestry. This allows us to capture children's spontaneous learning through photos, videos and comments which are uploaded to their journal. To ensure that each child is making progress we continually observe and make notes on the children in their work and play, their social and emotional behaviours and their speaking and listening skills. Over a period of time, Tapestry will provide a valuable insight into what the children know and understand and in turn informs us of children's next steps. Parents will be able to view their child's journal from home and contribute relevant material.

Throughout the EYFS our provision enables the children to work towards a set of goals called 'Early Learning Goals'. Children are guided through a series of developmental stages and observed to collect evidence of their capabilities. It is expected that by the end of the foundation stage the children will have achieved a good level of development. This is defined as meeting Early Learning Goals in all Prime Areas and Literacy and Mathematics. The children's progress is recorded electronically 4 times a year. At the end of Reception, this information is then sent to the local authority for data analysis and is used for transition to Key Stage 1 to ensure that next steps are challenging and appropriate.

At the end of a child's time in Nursery and Reception, parents will also receive a report summarising their child's progress. Parents are encouraged to add their views again at this time.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities & Equal Opportunities

The early identification of any developmental delay is vital in order for every child to reach their full potential. Through our monitoring and close liaison with the SEND co-ordinator within school, other professional agencies outside school and our families, we can ensure that every child will receive the necessary support.

Any child with additional needs will be fully involved in our school community and will have the same opportunities to develop and learn, and be treated with the same respect and care as any other child or adult.

Safety & Risk Assessment

Safety is of prime importance and we endeavour to make the children as safe as possible. Children are taught to handle tools and equipment with appropriate care and respect for themselves and others and resources are regularly checked for potential hazards. Staff are aware of the need for the physical safety of the children and will at all times endeavour to keep exits safe. However, we also expect that parents and visitors adhere to these requirements and ensure that they close gates and doors properly as they enter and exit the buildings.

We recognise that children need opportunities to learn from situations that present a challenge and to develop the necessary skills to make their own risk assessment and in view of this we do offer the use of large climbing and balancing equipment both indoors and out. We are very aware of the possible dangers and again we teach children to use them safely and staff are always present. However, as in any situation, we cannot provide a totally risk free environment in fact, risky play has been identified as an important feature of children's development. At St Andrew's we wish to encourage our children to be confident and to challenge themselves.

The following policy and guidelines should be considered with other whole school policies and schemes of work.

This document was presented to all staff and Governors in November 2015, discussed and appropriate adaptations made.