

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Policy

Reviewed: April 2022
To be reviewed: April 2025

St. John's C.E. (C) Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Rationale

In accordance with the Christian Values at St John's C.E (C) Primary School we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life, providing a strong foundation for their future learning. We are committed to providing a safe and happy environment for all of our pupils, living by our Christian vision. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. In the Foundation Stage children learn best through play-based activities and first hand experiences that motivate them to become confident and independent learners. Each child is unique and is valued as an individual; we work alongside parents and carers to help each child reach their full potential.

As outlined in the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage':

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.'

Aims and objectives

This policy aims to ensure:

We adhere to the 'Statutory Framework of the EYFS' 2021 and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/ carers;
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

Practice and Procedures

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven curriculum areas, using play as the vehicle for learning;
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment and by the children's own ideas and interests;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, child-initiated and adult supported;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.

Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals.

All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

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, both in the EYFS and into Key Stage 1. These three areas are the **prime** areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

We have developed the curriculum giving **communication and language** skills a high priority. This is in line with Development Matters 2021: ***“The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children’s back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children’s language effectively.”***

A high priority is also given to the teaching of **reading**. We aim to teach children to read and develop a love of books and/or appreciate the importance of reading in our lives as soon as they arrive at St John’s. Books are widely used to teach topics and to enhance our whole curriculum.

We follow a systematic approach to **phonics** teaching based on the Read, Write, Inc scheme.

We underpin our curriculum with the Personal Social and Emotional Development of all our children. We strive to enable children to be safe, happy, confident individuals. We also encourage self-regulation as much as possible and introduce rules and boundaries through modelling good behaviour and reflection time.

Planning and Teaching

We believe in the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning that are set out in Development Matters 2021. These are:

1. **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’.
2. **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achieving.
3. **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

We create medium term plans based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning. Each topic planned is included in the curriculum for specific reasons and we want to ensure that all children leave the Reception Year ready to start the KS1 curriculum.

We always remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children’s responses. Our planning is continually evaluated by all staff to ensure that children’s individual ‘Next Steps in Learning’ and personalised learning needs are met.

Children will engage in whole group and small group activities alongside their independent learning. There are also allocated times for whole class daily ‘carpet learning sessions’.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework: ***‘Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities’.***

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults. During children’s play, the adults in class interact when appropriate to stretch and challenge them further.

In planning and guiding children’s activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice. We create a stimulating learning environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and outdoors as far as possible.

Assessment

During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a mixture of the statutory government baseline and also through teacher observations. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We record each child’s level of development throughout the year and record whether each child is on track or not on track to meet a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the year in July. Children will be judged at either an emerging level or an expected level in each early learning goal. The exceeding level no longer applies.

Please see appendix a regarding assessment within the Early Years at St John's.

Working with parents

At St John's C.E (C) Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with their parents. We value the role of parents as children's primary educators.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's learning through regular letters, reading records, homework, messages on the class Dojo system, our website and informal chats at the beginning and end of the day. We hold half termly topic workshops for parents plus some phonics and maths workshops throughout the year. There are termly parents meetings to discuss individual children's progress. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We help children to self-regulate and manage their emotions appropriately and Personal Social and Emotional Education is at the heart of everything we do.

Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. We know that children learn best when they are healthy and safe, when their individual needs are met and when they have the chance to build positive relationships with the adults around them and their peers.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policies.

We are a healthy school and participate in the free fruit and milk for under-fives scheme. For our Reception children we provide the universal infant free school meal and the menu is regularly monitored with the chef. We cater for those children who have special dietary requirements and have robust systems in place ensuring that all children receive the correct meal. We make sure that children with allergies or other dietary requirements are catered for in conjunction with our catering providers.

Fresh water is readily available for all children and we encourage children to bring in water bottles so that they can help themselves to water at any time.

A member of staff in the setting has a recognised pediatric first aid qualification in line with the EYFS framework 2021.

Inclusion and Equality

In line with our duties under the Equality Act (2010) and as set out in our Equality Policy we are committed to providing a teaching environment conducive to learning. Each child is valued, respected and challenged regardless of race, gender, religion, social background, culture or disability.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed following the 3-year Policy Review Cycle of the school or when there are significant changes to the curriculum that warrant it. It may also be reviewed earlier should it no longer comply with school practice or the legal requirements of school.

Policy produced by Catherine Rowbotham

Date: 26.04.22

Approved by (Chair of Governors)

Date:

Review Date: April 2025

If you need further copies of this document, or would like the document in another format, such as enlarged print, audio tape or another language, please contact Sarmilla Dhangar, Bursar on:

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Appendix a

Assessment within the EYFS September 2021

Summative Assessment:

- NFER national baseline assessment within the child's first 6 week's at school.
- Regular RWI assessments throughout the year to ensure children are in the correct phonics group and are given a reading book with the correct level of challenge.
- Half termly Maths assessments. These help us to ensure that no child with gaps in their knowledge has been missed from our Maths interventions. We also use this to give parents some 'next steps' that their child can be working on ready for the following half term.
- Assessments in RE, music and PE are done after each unit of work. Assessments are recorded on knowledge organisers to show who is working at emerging, basic, advancing and deep levels.
- Summer 2 assessments against the Early Learning Goals. We use these to report to the LA, parents and to provide a basis for a detailed discussion with the Year 1 teachers.

Formative Assessment:

- A member of staff is timetabled to 'play' with children in provision. They support, model and extend play as well as having those crucial conversations with children. During this time staff will observe any 'wow moments' for individuals and these will be celebrated with parents via the class dojo.
Also, during this time, any children causing concern in an area of learning are noted. It may be that this leads them to doing a prevention or being part of an intervention group.
- During whole class carpet inputs, Maths and English focus tasks; children are added to our prevention timetable if they need extra support in a particular area. Preventions are carried out on the spot or in the afternoon session by a timetabled adult. Parents are informed of any preventions done with their child so that they can continue to give support with this at home.

- Support staff and teachers in EYFS have constant dialogues about children's successes and causes for concern
- Teachers meet half termly with the headteacher to discuss pupil progress and support provided for those children not on track.

Catherine Rowbotham EYFS coordinator