

St Mary's C of E School



Policy for the Foundation Stage September 2015

Date agreed:

Signed:

Signed

Date for review:

Headteacher:

Chair of governors:

St Mary's Church of England Foundation Stage Policy.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life, as well as support to reach their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.” EYFS 2012

St Mary's C of E Foundation Stage Introduction.

The Foundation Stage applies to children from three years of age to the end of the reception year. In our school, parents have the opportunity to place their children into our Foundation 1 (Pre-school) in the term following their 3rd birthday. The sessions run from 9.00am -12.00 noon, giving a maximum of 15 hours per week for any child. The hours offered are dependent on numbers already attending the setting. For Foundation 2 (Reception), all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are 5. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child’s fifth birthday.)

The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Children joining our school have already learned a great deal based on their formative lives. The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points; content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment.

Aims of the foundation Stage

The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children’s:

- Personal, social and emotional well-being;
- Positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning;
- Social skills;
- Attention skills and persistence;
- Language and communication;
- Reading and writing;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding of the world;
- Physical development;
- Expressive arts and design

Teaching and learning styles

Our whole school policies on Teaching and Learning and the Curriculum define the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2. The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- Strong partnership between staff and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- Secure understanding that all EYFS staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- Variety of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanation, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- Carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- Provision for all children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- Positive encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- Support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;

- Accurate identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- Good relationships between all our school staff working in the foundation unit;
- Weekly planning meetings held with all staff who are responsible for Foundation Stage planning (i.e Pre-school and school staff)
- Clear vision and aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- Regular and pertinent identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.
- Close liaison with the school SENCo, inclusion co-ordinator and where needed outside agencies to ensure that the individual child's needs are met and that provision is fully inclusive.

Experience in the Foundation Stage

Our children are included fully in the planning of topics to ensure they have ownership and their interests are met.

Through a variety of planned experiences our children :

- Explore and develop, helping them to make sense of the world.
- Practice and build up ideas
- Learn how to control themselves
- Understand the need for rules.
- Have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own.
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.
- Express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

In our school we believe that all children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children, with the aspiration that all children will achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their time in EYFS. Some children progress beyond this point.

By planning to meet the needs of each child, we aim for all children to make the best progress they can in the EYFS .

We ensure that planning meets the needs of all by:

- Including children in the planning process right from the very start, to ensure it meets their interests
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interest, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. For example this can involve speech therapy as Early intervention for some of our children which is delivered by a Speech and Language Specialist HLTA .

The Foundation Stage Curriculum

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Our medium term planning is completed half-termly and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals, and for those working towards National Curriculum for year 1.

Assessment

We make regular assessments of children’s learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.

During the children's first half-term in the reception class the teacher assesses the ability of each child using information passed on from other feeder preschools backed up by the staff's own observations. This provides attainment on entry information. In addition to this, from September 2015 onwards we will be completing the Early Excellence baseline assessment. We use this information to modify the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. Our Pre-School children are not part of this at present, so therefore are only assessed against the Development Matters documents. This gives a clear and seamless transition for those pupils entering our main school.

We share the information with parents at the parental consultation meeting in the Autumn term. This is revisited and shared with parents at the Spring consultation meeting to ensure they are fully informed of their child's progress. In addition to this, parents are welcomed into our setting to share their child's learning journey as often as possible.

The teacher completes the Foundation Stage Profile assessment at the end of the child's reception year and records each child's attainment level. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead for groups and individuals. We share this information with parents in the form of an end of year progress report in July. Parents receive this annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June and send them to parents in early July each year.

The role of parents and carers

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents and carers have played, and will continue to play in educating the children.

We engage with parents by:

- Offering teacher visits to all children in their home setting prior to their starting pre-school (and school, if children have not attended in our St Mary's Pre-School)
- Inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Offering parents and carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress during their child's time in our Foundation unit.

- Encouraging parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Formal meetings for parents and carers each term to confidentially discuss the child's progress.
- Parents of Reception aged children, receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Flexible admission arrangements that enable children to become secure and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances.
- Offering a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents and cares.
- Offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents and carers.
- Regular communication with home through the child's school diary for Reception aged children
- Daily communication between parents and their child's key worker in Pre School

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. Children have opportunities to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

Monitoring and evaluation of policy

The Early Years leader together with the head teacher will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and update every two years.

Meeting individual needs

Learning will be specifically adapted to meet the individual needs of children to ensure these children make full access to the curriculum and make good progress. Speech and language (SAL) needs are targeted in EYFS in house with a SAL teaching assistant. Interventions to accelerate learning are used when appropriate either for an individual child or a small group. All interventions and adaptations to the curriculum are fully discussed with parents and carers, the SENCo and Inclusion co-ordinator. The SENCo keeps a record of all children on the EYFS Graduated

Approach to individual Needs and also works closely with the EYFS leader to ensure provision for Early Years Pupil Premium children is effective and closing gaps.

Equal Opportunities

The school's PSED objectives include narrowing the gap in attainment and progress of children with SMEH SEN, Pupil Premium and also EAL learners.

The school will ensure that all children that need additional help with fine motor control have access to additional support and also that alternative methods of recording are made available as appropriate.

Health and Safety including risk assessments and e safety

EYFS follows the schools main Health and Safety policy. EYFs is responsible on a day to day basis of ensuring that areas are safe and fit for purpose. Risk assessments for the outside areas and for all areas visited are kept up to date and shared with all staff. These will be written by the EYFS leader supported by key staff (PTaylor H Tyreman A Varker as appropriate)

E safety

EYFS follows the whole school policies on this and children in EYFS also take part in Digital Literacy lessons that are appropriate to their age and understanding.

Governor involvement

The Early years Governor makes regular visits to the Early Years setting as outlined in the monitoring and evaluation schedule. This can be to learn about Early Years, discuss issues for development and also to ensure EYFS data is fully understood. Following all visits a report is completed and presented to the Full Governing body meetings in line with the Governors Visits Policy.