St. John's C. of E.

Blackpool's First Free School 1817

Teaching & Learning Policy for Foundation Stage

'In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.'
Matthew 7:12

Be Kind Be Forgiving Be a Good Friend Be Honest Love One Another

Be part of our St John's family!

Last updated: October 2023

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Introduction

At St John's CE Primary School Foundation Stage, we believe that:

'Everyone Matters in God's World.'

This policy reflects our ethos which, promotes, recognises, celebrates and welcomes diversity, honesty, respect and tolerance. This is rooted in our theological Christian vision: 'In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.' Matthew 7:12

With this in mind we want our children to have access to teaching and learning experiences of the highest quality that are relevant to the needs and experiences of our children. We ensure all learning styles are catered for within the indoor and outdoor environments and promote independent learning, empowering our children to actively participate and enjoy their learning journey and develop as a lifelong learner.

Aims

Teaching and Learning in our Foundation Stage Unit is based firmly on the four themes and principles of the EYFS documentation.

A Unique Child

"Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured."

Positive Relationships

"Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person."

Enabling Environments

"The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning."

Learning and Development

"Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates and all Areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected."

Our classroom is set up to provide high quality learning experiences which the children can access either independently or with the support and guidance of an adult. By providing a stimulating, rich environment coupled with thoughtful teaching the children are supported through new learning and skill acquisition whist developing their own thinking and understanding. we can provide our children with a curriculum that is based on the experiential level a child is working at.

By planning our teaching input to be playful, by providing a stimulating, thought provoking environment and by having the child at the very centre of all that we do we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners
- encourage creativity and foster an ethos that supports critical and reflective learners
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people

- develop children's self-respect and encourage them to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others
- show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

Effective Teaching and Learning

Effective Learning

- We recognize that young children learn best through play and utilize this as a common thread that runs through everything in the classroom.
    - "In play, a child is always above his average age, above his daily behaviour; in play it is as if he were a head taller than himself." Vygotsky

- We acknowledge that children learn in many different ways and recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them.
- Young children learn best by doing. They need to be active and see a purpose in what they are involved with. Wherever possible the children should be expected to collect the resources they need and be allowed the opportunity to cut, create and shape their own items with the minimum of adult intervention.
- Learning is holistic. It embraces the whole child and what their current needs are.
- We provide opportunities for children to see links in their learning, practicing and refining their skills and knowledge in all areas of provision.
- The outdoor environment is seen as a valuable learning space which offers untold opportunities for children to learn new skills and practice those they already have.
- Continuous Provision activities are available for the children to work with all the time. These activities have been carefully set up to allow opportunities for the children to learn through exploration and play and through sensitive questioning and support by the adults, the child's thinking and understanding is developed and expanded.
- We recognize that children are interested in a myriad of things and endeavour to cater for this by providing activities and experiences that are directly linked to the children's interests.

Effective teaching

- All adults work with and support the children to help them make connections in their learning, develop understanding, sustained thinking and a reflective attitude.
- Play is valued as an important medium for learning and teaching activities are presented in a playful, engaging manner.
- Talk, repetition and working from first- hand experience are all used in the process of teaching a new skill or consolidating a known skill.
- The environment is always stimulating and rich, with an atmosphere of awe and wonder both indoors and outside. This supports both the Teaching and Learning activities within the classroom.
- The adults are skilled at utilizing every opportunity to its full learning potential.

Planning and organizing the Foundation Stage Curriculum

The curriculum is organized to allow the children to have rich and varied experiences. Whilst the adults acknowledge there needs to be a framework for planning and a steady build up of skills, the ethos of the classroom is that the child is at the centre of everything and all learning opportunities must be practical, relevant, playful and fun. We strive to follow the interests of the children and use these as a 'carrier' to teach other more formal skills.

- Planning is a balance between the planned, Adult Directed activities which are provided to develop the skill levels of the children and the Child Initiated activities which are spontaneous learning opportunities created by the children.
- The long term planning is, in effect, achievement of the Early Learning Goal for each of the 17 Aspects for the Areas of Learning and Development. These are the National expectations for all Reception aged children. Whilst we do not teach directly to these outcomes we have these as an overview of what it is that our children need to know by the end of Foundation Stage.
- Medium term planning is completed for each half term. This planning is based on seasonal change and events and we have a bank of core texts we use to support learning through the use of high quality story books and non fiction texts. This enables us to link areas of learning to the theme, so helping the children to make those links in their learning. This planning gives a framework to the term, developing certain key skills. However, it is planned in advance so is subject to changes at the short term planning stage.
- Short term planning. This is the few key adult directed activities that will be taking place that week, together with any enhancements that may be happening. At this stage the planning needs to be relevant to the children's stage of development and interests at that precise moment in time, so may differ from Medium term planning.
- Daily diary. Activities for the day are written into the diary together with the staff member that will lead the activity. During the day, any spontaneous learning opportunities or areas to develop are noted at the bottom of the page. This is the most accurate record of what has actually happened during the day and may vary from the short or medium term planning. This reflects the dynamic way in which young children learn and how learning opportunities present themselves in unplanned activities.
- The planning for much of the above is skills based, so allowing a systematic progression of key skills. However, the delivery of these skills can be in a variety of formats ~ just because there is an adult input it doesn't mean the delivery is table based.
- Child Initiated Learning. The environment is set up to allow countless opportunities for children to be independent learners. The children are confident to ask for any extra resources and an adult is usually drawn into the learning, supporting and extending this over time. Child Initiated learning is of immense value as it allows the adults to see exactly where the child is in their thinking and skillful intervention can bring about a powerful learning experience.
- Enhancements. These are used in many ways. They can be used to extend a child's interest and develop further learning, or used to enhance an area of provision. Both of these are usually at the child's request or interest. The adults may enhance an area to provoke a response or challenge thinking or extend a thought process.
- Challenges. Usually put out by an adult with the intention of extending thinking or questioning.
- Daily maths takes place with the whole class and follows the mastery approach with supplementary planning from White Rose maths

- Discreet phonic teaching takes place daily using the Pearson Phonic Bug Scheme. The children work in groups matched to their current phase level. The children read in small guided group sessions to further develop application and consolidation of their phonic skills.

Assessment and record keeping

Baseline Assessment

Reception children may start with a Nursery Transfer Document and on entry we will complete the Government national baseline assessment. These are completed within the first few weeks. Children are assessed formatively throughout the year and a summative assessment is made at the end of the year against the Early Learning Goals.

Observations are the key to assessing where children are in their learning. We use TAPESTRY to collect evidence and observations and these form our children's learning journal. Parents are invited to contribute and take part in their child's learning journal.

Please note: *the TAPESTRY online journal service is fully compliant with the new Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In line with the DPA principles, personal information is collected and stored for educational purposes only; it is securely stored and data is only shared with school and the Department for Education (DfE). You can request data held on TAPESTRY to be corrected and/or deleted at any time by contacting school. A copy of the TAPESTRY privacy policy is available in school.*

Observations

Tapestry is our online learning journal. Observations may be planned around a specific learning focus or skill or capture the child's learning at that moment in time during child initiated play. All staff are asked to contribute and assess the child's learning on an ongoing basis. Tapestry observations are shared with parents and they are encouraged to add their own learning from home to support a child's learning journey or are able to comment on an observation made by staff. When observations are made and recorded they are WOW moments!

Parental information

All information from parents is valued and they are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey via TAPESTRY.

Individual Learning Journals

Our online learning journals are provided by TAPESTRY. We hold safeguarding and information meetings with new parents to explain how their child's journal will work.

Tracking

We track children's progress through a variety of summative and formative methods throughout each day, week and term. Assessments are constantly made and the curriculum tailored to meet needs. We collect data 3 times a year where we record on track not on track.

Moderation

Teaching staff attend Local Authority Moderation clusters when available we also liaise with other school and at cluster meetings.

Reporting to parents

We have 2 parent's evenings each year and an end of year report. We also have a regular contact via our online learning journal TAPESTRY.

Transfer Information

Information about the Reception children will be shared with the Y1 teacher in the summer term. Data will be discussed to ensure a smooth transition into Y1. All children entering Reception will have been visited at their nursery by the EYFS manager and at home by the reception teacher.

Role of the staff

- All staff in EYFS are committed to ensuring that the children in our care are happy, motivated, confident and secure.
- Staff understand the importance of knowing where a child is in their learning and being able to plan to move the child forwards in their learning in a challenging yet achievable way.
- Staff to have an understanding of child development to enable them to plan for and provide experiences and opportunities that are developmentally appropriate.
- All staff understand the importance of child initiated activities and value these activities as being positive learning experiences.
- All staff understands that children learn best through first- hand experience and play and to use this knowledge as the foundation of all that happens in the classroom.
- All staff recognise the potential of the outdoor environment and support the children's learning and enjoyment of the outside environment understanding that children want to be outdoors whatever the weather!
- Staff are mindful and sensitive towards each other taking turns and sharing indoor and outdoor responsibilities.
- All staff to support the development of a rich, dynamic and stimulating indoor and outdoor environment which will support the children's learning and development.
- All staff to follow the agreed values and ethos of the unit seeing these as an integral part of day to day routines and ensuring a consistency of approach at all times.
- All staff to maintain an up to date knowledge of EYFS and be guided in Professional Developmentby new initiatives or ideas.
- All staff to attend team meetings, courses and other professional development opportunities.
- All staff to be enthusiastic and committed to the philosophy and working of the classroom.
- Staff ensure information and messages are passed to everyone where necessary but in all cases to the Foundation Stage Leader.

Inclusion

Inclusion is meant in the widest sense. It incorporates children and young people as well as the rights of parents/carers, students and all staff. It includes individuals with Special Educational Needs and/or a disability, children who are more-able as well as those from minority ethnic

groups, Travellers and any other diverse cultural group. It also includes those with English as an additional language and Children in Public Care (Looked After Children). It includes individuals with specific medical needs and those individualssuffering from low self- esteem or experiencing mental health difficulties are also included.
It also incorporates the rights of the child and equal opportunities, as well as any other groups at risk of exclusion or social exclusion.

Equal Opportunities

Equal opportunities at St. John's School are carried out according to our agreed Equality Policy. All teaching and non-teaching staff are responsible for ensuring that all pupils irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, and social circumstances have access to the whole curriculum and opportunities to make the greatest possible progress in all areas of the curriculum whilst in our school. The monitoring of the policy for Equality is ultimately the responsibility of the Head teacher and the Senior Leadership Team, but every member of staff is responsible for the day to day operation of the policy in terms of promoting good practice.

Parental Involvement

We aim to promote parental partnership and involvement in children's learning and in the life of the school. Parent(s) is used throughout to mean those people who are the primary carers of children in our school and could include grandparents, foster carers and others.

We aim:

- To foster an ethos and atmosphere where all parents feel welcome and valued.
- To maintain an 'open door' approach so that parents are able to communicate with staff on a regular basis, both formally and informally.
- To provide as much information as possible in timely, specific, targeted and accessible ways so that parents feel confident and knowledgeable in supporting their children's learning.
- To seek parents' views and opinions and act upon them.
- To provide support and encouragement for families suffering difficulties or crises, or barriers to involvement.
- To work with parents in promoting positive behaviour at home and at school.
- To seek to provide a range of activities, courses and workshops to promote parental involvement in children's learning, and also 'lifelong learning' for both children and adults.

We ask parents to support us by:

- Ensuring their child arrives at school on time.
- Sharing with the staff any problems in school that their child is experiencing
- Making sure we have all contact addresses and telephone numbers
- Informing the school of reasons for child's absence