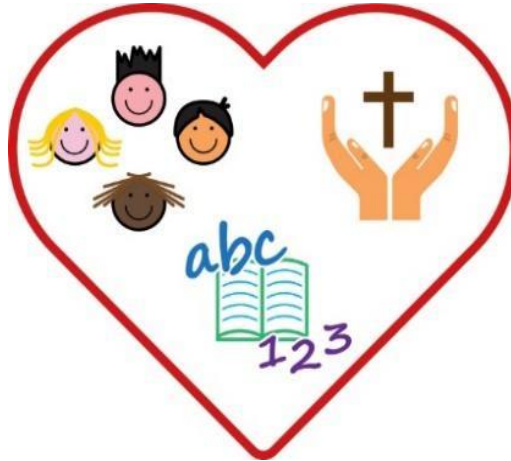


ST. MATTHEW'S C.E. PRIMARY ACADEMY



Early Years Policy

Reviewed: March 2024
By: N. Shaikh (EYFS LEAD)

Date of next review: March 2027

Early Years Policy

Mission Statement:

St. Matthew's C.E. Primary Academy is dedicated to providing an education which enables every child to fulfil their best potential. It seeks to promote academic, emotional and spiritual growth in a Christian environment, welcoming children drawn from diverse cultures.

Vision Statement:

*Inspired by Jesus' words (Matthew 5: 1-12), we strive to promote academic, emotional and spiritual growth in a Christian environment for all members of our Academy family.
We can all **'Be blessed by God, be happy and aspire to be...'***

Introduction

At St Matthew's C.E. Primary Academy, all teaching staff deliver an EYFS curriculum through immersion in high quality teaching alongside an enriched environment. The curriculum is tailored to provide all children with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to be confident, inquisitive, curious, independent learners and influence their wider thinking across all areas of the curriculum. Our philosophy is to nurture every child's love of learning, developing both skills and confidence as they take their first steps on their own unique journey, ready to succeed in an ever-changing world.

'Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.'

'Statutory Framework for the EYFS'.

At St Matthews, we recognise the importance of giving our children the best possible start to their education by planning and implementing teaching and learning opportunities that support them in reaching their full potential and fulfilling their dreams. The children experience the seven areas of learning through a balance of whole class/group teaching and play based learning. This is through the children's interests, topics, themes, continuous provision activities, and phonics. Learning is carefully planned by the staff to support communication and language development; personal, social, and emotional development; and physical development as well as literacy, mathematics, understanding of the world and expressive arts and design. We understand that oracy not only improves academic outcomes but is a life skill to ensure success beyond school, in life and future employment. Oracy develops children's thinking and understanding, which in turn promotes self-confidence, resilience and empathy which support the child's well-being. Our enabling environments and warm, skillful adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration right from the start.

Early Years in this setting consists of:

The term Early Years Foundation Stage refers to children from birth to the end of the reception year.

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The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

Organisation and management of provision:

Early Years provision at St Matthew's Academy is organised into:

- A 52 place sessional nursery, 26 children attend morning sessions, and 26 children attend afternoon sessions. The nursery has access to an outdoor area and has toilet and kitchen facilities. Again, a wide range of indoor /outdoor equipment and resources are available.
- One large Reception Unit which consists of two reception classes for 30 pupils aged 4-5. All children have access to the outside play space and a wide range of indoor /outdoor equipment and resources are available to meet the needs of the children. The children also have access to other equipment and facilities throughout the school, e.g. hall, library etc.

Nursery session times:

Mornings	Monday - Friday	9:00am -12:00 pm.
Afternoons	Monday - Friday	12:10 pm - 3:10 pm.

School session times:

School day - 8:55 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Lunchtime – 11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Doors are open from 8:45 am

Parental Engagement

Parents are the first and most important influence on their child's development and future outcomes. Children have two main educators in their lives – their parents and their teachers. Therefore, the school and the parents all have crucial roles to play. The impact on a child's education is greater if parents and school work in partnership.

At St Matthew's C.E Primary Academy, parents are invited to be involved in every step of a child's journey in education. Beginning with a pre- start meeting, followed up with home visits (Nursery) and the invitation for their child to attend several 'transition' sessions before the Autumn term commences. Updates will be put onto the school website and dojo and photographs will be taken of the children. All work and any concerns will also be shared with

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parents throughout the year. Teachers will talk to parents after school about the school day. A school report will be sent out at the end of the child's time in Nursery and Reception.

Parents will be invited into school for:

- Story time
- Stay and explore sessions
- Special events

All staff involved in the education of young children will develop good relationships with the children in their care so that they feel secure, respected and are able to make mistakes and cope with failure as well as building confidently on their successes.

Transition Procedures

Nursery children are admitted using a staggered entry system during the Autumn term.

Reception children are admitted full-time using a staggered entry system during the first week of the Autumn Term.

Points of transition:

- Home/Pre-school to Nursery
Induction day, home visits, information booklet, transfer of information.
- Nursery to Reception
Induction meeting for parents, induction visits for children, reception staff visit nursery during summer term, school brochure, transfer of information.
- Reception to Y1
Year One teachers visit Reception classes during the summer term, Reception children visit Year One during the final term of the summer, parents are informed who the next class teacher will be and transfer of information.

Special Educational Needs

Governors and staff acknowledge that wherever possible, children with Special Educational Needs are given the opportunity to attend St Matthew's if their parents so wish. All children are entitled to equality of access to the full range of educational experiences available.

The school aims to identify as early as possible those children who have Special Educational Needs and act promptly to assess the child's needs and support them in the best way. These needs or concerns may be about developmental delays, learning difficulties, physical disabilities, emotional or behavioural problems, social or family circumstances that may be affecting achievement. Teachers and staff working in partnership with the SENCO will gather information and contact relevant agencies. Parents will be involved in all aspects of assessing, registering, planning the learning programmes and reviewing the child's progress.

EAL

Children with English as an additional language are supported in school by experienced teachers and LSA's in class, as well as our inclusion team. Children are encouraged and given opportunities to speak in their home language. Where possible children are introduced to new concepts and vocabulary in their home language. wherever possible.

Learning and Development

'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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

'Statutory Framework for the EYFS'.

At St Matthew's, we provide a carefully structured curriculum based on the new Development Matters and Early Learning Goals. Through adult-led and child-initiated activities, children will have the opportunity to explore, investigate, discover and consolidate their knowledge, skills and understanding. We ensure we will address the individual needs of all children by enabling them to participate in a broad, balanced, relevant and age-appropriate curriculum, with due regard to equal opportunities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for Year 1.

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas."

The prime areas are

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

The specific areas are

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

Our staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Organisation and management of the learning environment:

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The foundation units are organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment. Equipment and resources are accessible and can be located and used independently by children. The enclosed outdoor spaces are secure and offer children the opportunity to explore a different environment, presenting them with different challenges and experiences. Activities are planned throughout the foundation units to help the children develop in all areas of learning. We encourage children to explore the outdoors at all times of year and in all weathers. We provide appropriate clothing if required.

Assessment

At St Matthew's, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

At the start of Nursery, staff review children's progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other Academy schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

Staff Development

The identification of training needs for all practitioners will take place through Performance Management and/or staff development interviews. The statutory supervision meetings for Early Years will take place each term. Appropriate dissemination of training and INSET will take place, and feedback from all courses will be shared with all the staff.

Reviewing the Early Years policy.

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Early Years Leader to ensure it is being implemented appropriately and to take account of changing circumstances. Early Years provision is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.