



Aim high, be courageous, show love and kindness

St Nicholas C of E Primary School



EYFS (Reception) Policy

Adopted by Governing body May 2024
Review date: May 2025



EYFS at St Nicholas C of E Community Primary School

Introduction

In our EYFS at St Nicholas, we place great value on the development of children as individuals and providing them with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to prepare them for not only the challenges in Key Stage One but beyond. We believe that all children deserve an education rich in language, awe & wonder and memorable experiences that allows children's natural creativity and curiosity to flourish, alongside the purposeful acquisition of skills and knowledge.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Vision

Our EYFS vision is based on the Early Years Framework and 4 overarching principles of the framework that shape our practice, as shown below:

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

Positive Relationships – Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

Enabling Environments – 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 and carers.

Learning and Development – Children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early year's provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Woven throughout our EYFS is our school vision to *"Aim high, be courageous and show love & kindness"* underpinned by our Christian values.

It is our EYFS vision that ...

- Our children will be inspired and feel included, allowing them to flourish.
- Our children will be motivated, enthusiastic, resilient, independent and curious learners, who question, explore, solve problems, articulate their thinking and are ready for the next stage in their individual learning.
- Our enabling environments will be welcoming, visually explicit, well resourced, appropriately enhanced and meticulously planned for. They will offer experiences that are rich, varied, imaginative and highly challenging and which are appropriate to the needs of all children.
- We will deliver a sequential and progressive curriculum which clearly outlines the knowledge and skills that children will learn and build on as they progress through the Foundation Stage. At the end of their journey through Early Years our children will be able to transition into Year 1 and continue their journey of life-long learning.

- Our staff will have an in-depth and up to date knowledge about all subjects, EYFS Framework, pedagogy, EYFS Child development and a good understanding of the individual needs of our children and the cohort. They will understand quality first teaching and have high expectations of what children can achieve. They will use this knowledge to drive the learning, closing gaps and accelerating progress.

Structure & staffing

The Early Years Foundation Stage at St Nicholas consists of a Reception provision which is two 30 place Reception classes.

In our Reception classes, each class will have 1 class teacher and 1 teaching assistant per class, plus specifically appointed staff to support children with additional needs and interventions. All staff in Reception develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Our EYFS intent – Why do we teach what we teach?

Our aim is to build strong foundations rooted in academic success as well as moral and spiritual development, so that ultimately our pupils develop into happy, confident learners, who go on to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow. Everyone in Reception is a learner and our staff are committed to supporting learning in all its forms and will tailor individuals needs accordingly so that all children are capable of achieving their individual potential.

We have the highest aspirations for every child, believing that they should be empowered to take ownership of their learning and their environment. Our staff invest time in promoting a positive learning environment and learning experience in which children develop a love for learning that continues throughout their educational journey. We aim to provide and maintain a safe, attractive, stimulating and reassuring environment, which is a secure platform from which all children develop physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually. The learning environments are welcoming, visually explicit, well resourced, appropriately enhanced and meticulously planned for. They offer experiences that are rich, varied, imaginative and highly challenging and which are appropriate to the needs of the children.

When children transition to our Reception, they and their families will find a positive, nurturing & safe environment where all are welcomed and valued. This allows them to become part of the St Nicholas family. We aim to work collaboratively with parents to ensure their child gets a good start to the educational journey with us and beyond.

The majority of our children transition from local nurseries but every child is an individual and arrives at St Nicholas with different cultural capital, experiences and at varied stages of development. It is our intent to take into consideration their starting points and needs of our pupils as they begin their learning journey with us. With this in mind, we aim to provide a sequential and progressive curriculum, which clearly outlines the knowledge and skills that children will learn and build on as they progress through the Foundation Stage. Every child has access to a broad & balanced curriculum which prepares them for now and for the future in terms of opportunities and experiences.

Our EYFS Discovery curriculum aims to enable our children to be:

- **Competent and creative learners**; who are curious about the world around them.
- **Secure and confident**; who enjoy coming to school and learning new skills and knowledge building on their existing learning.
- **Skilful communicators**; who connect with others through language and play, ensuring that they play in a vocab rich environment.

Implementation – How do we teach what we teach?

At St Nicholas we follow the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. The EYFS Framework includes 7 areas of Learning and Development which shape activities and experiences for children in all early years settings. Three of these areas are known as the **prime areas** - Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development and these are recognised as the main focus for learning in EYFS in order to provide children with the necessary skills to access the curriculum into Key Stage 1. The **specific areas** are Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. Our bespoke discovery curriculum and progressive milestones are underpinned by the prime and specific areas.

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and exploring - children have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

***'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.'* (Early Years Foundation Stage, DCFS 2007)**

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, learn how to self-regulate their emotions and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

- Active learning - children have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and to enjoy their achievements.

***'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.'* (Early Years Foundation Stage, DCFS 2007)**

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

- Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

***'When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.'* ('Creativity and Critical Thinking', EYFS 2007)**

***'...children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time'* (Statutory Framework for Early Years 2021)**

Children are given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open-ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the environments freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Our bespoke Discovery Curriculum –

With the statutory EYFS Framework in mind and with our desire to build the strong foundations for our children's future, we have designed our bespoke milestones of skills and knowledge specifically designed to provide children with important and progressive foundational skills and knowledge that will later be enhanced and embedded in KS1 and built on as they continue their journey through our school.

As our children arrive at St Nicholas at varying stages of development, our milestones reflect that not every child arrives at our school with the expected age-related set of skills and knowledge for a reception child. This is what our curriculum is based upon and we call it our Discovery Curriculum.

Reading and Communication & Language are at the heart of our Discovery Curriculum and we use books as hooks to engage and inspire the children and to provide exciting, enriching learning experiences that focus on specific areas of learning and development. For example, we use the story *In every house, on every street* by Jess Hitchman, as a hook to learn about where the children live, focusing on skills and knowledge in the areas of learning and development for Understanding the World, Communication & Language and PSED.

This approach we feel, gives our wonderful children the best opportunities to apply learning from across the curriculum, to provide a language rich environment to support language acquisition, to share awe and wonder, to promote sustained thinking and active learning, encourage curiosity and allow the children to apply knowledge and skills they have learned. Thus becoming successful learners, who have a love of learning in the very beginnings of their educational journey.

Reception pupils at St Nicholas follow the Essential Letters and Sounds scheme which is in line with KS1. Children participate in a daily phonics session, in line with school policy. Children are continually assessed and those who are at risk of falling behind, receive specific, targeted interventions to allow them to keep up with their peers. Summative assessments are completed regularly under the guidance of the Phonics Lead to monitor progress and attainment and support/challenge adapted as necessary.

Maths is taught daily following the EYFS White Rose Maths Programme which is in line with the rest of the school. Children are able to freely access resources and complete learning tasks that develop their skills and knowledge.

Impact – How do we know what our children have learnt?

Our Discovery Curriculum meets the needs of our children, including our disadvantaged children and those with SEND, so we use every opportunity we can to look at and evaluate how children are learning. This is achieved through high quality interactions with staff and children, looking at their work, observing their learning experiences and analysing data and progress. We assess children in all areas of learning and development at the start of the year and then subsequently at the end of term using our rigorous assessment process. This is then recorded on Sonar and we use this to measure our starting points and track progress against the national set of data. We compile evidence of children's learning on our learning journey displays, in our floorbooks, assessment folders and writing journals. Phonics and Maths Fluency is assessed each half term and this data is used to track progress and identify gaps.

During their time in our EYFS, children make rapid progress so that we meet the national expectation for GLD at the end of the year. Pupils also make good progress toward their age-related expectations before transitioning into Year One. We believe our high standards are due to the enriched play-based exploration alongside the rigor of assessment and teaching the children have as they move through the early years – a rich diet of balanced learning experiences is undoubtedly the best way to develop happy, curious children.

Statutory Assessment –

On entry to Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using the Standards & Testing Agency Reception Baseline Assessment, which is compulsory in UK schools. This assessment must be completed within the first 6 weeks of a child starting in Reception. The purpose of the assessment is to provide the starting point for a progress measure that will help parents understand how well schools support their pupils to progress between reception and year 6.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is a statutory assessment of children's attainment at the end of the early years foundation stage (known as a summative assessment). Children's attainment of the Early Learning Goals within the seven areas of learning is assessed and reported. Day-to-day informal checking of what children have learnt inform teaching and learning on an ongoing basis throughout the final year of the EYFS.

The main purpose of the EYFSP is to support a successful transition to Key Stage 1 by informing the professional dialogue between EYFS and year 1 staff. Practitioners are expected to use their professional judgement to make these assessments, based on their knowledge and understanding of what the child knows, understands and can do. These judgements should inform Year 1 staff about each child's stage of development and learning needs and support them to plan the Year 1 curriculum to meet the needs of all children. The EYFSP is also used to inform parents about their child's development. Parents are provided with this information in the end of year school reports in July.

SEND & Inclusion -

The Early Years Foundation Stage follows the school's SEND code of practice. A child has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. At St Nicholas C of E Primary School, we will make reasonable adjustments to ensure equal opportunities and inclusion for all.

Children learn in different ways and at different rates and our responses shape children's attitudes to learning. We consider each child's unique development, their individual interests and the way they learn, planning their learning accordingly. All children are included, and diversity and differences are respected and celebrated. Children are encouraged to make choices and decisions within clear and consistent boundaries ensuring children become confident to assess their own risks and learn to protect themselves. 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. We believe that early identification and early intervention is vital for children who are demonstrating developmental delays, specific behaviours or experiencing difficulties settling into the provision. Through following the school's SEND policy, swift and appropriate action is taken, a working relationship with parents is formed and outside agencies are used if appropriate.

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at St Nicholas C of E Primary School are treated fairly, regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are welcomed and valued within our school. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations matched to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. We do this through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, 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 learn effectively
- offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds
- monitoring children's progress and acting to provide assessment & support as necessary, such as referring to Speech Therapy or Educational Psychology etc.
- working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress

Building Positive Relationships -

We pride ourselves on our positive relationships between staff and children, children and children, staff and parents and staff and staff. We place a huge emphasis and create time to build trusting relationships, supporting children in exploring and understanding their own and other feelings.

At St Nicholas, we recognise the importance of forming positive relationships with our families. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development.

We understand and respect that parents know their children better than anyone and always seek to work in partnership with parents to support children's development and learning.

Our involvement of parents also includes:

- a friendly, open-door ethos ensuring staff are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day.
- a well-planned induction process
- talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at stay and play sessions and induction meetings
- ensuring information from all settings sending children to our school are consulted to ensure effective information sharing.
- ensuring we consult with all pre-school settings and childminders to ensure effective information sharing before pupils begin school
- providing information about commencing Reception at St Nicholas C of E Primary School.
- inviting parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time for an induction visit/s before starting school
- providing an induction and consultation meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have
- regular school newsletters and sharing of our termly curriculum maps which contain our overarching themes
- inviting parents to attend or access informal meetings/workshops about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics, reading or Mathematics
- offering three parent/teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed, two set by school and one on request in the summer
- sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in Reception
- asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc
- parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc
- offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers or sharing their career expertise.

Transition Process -

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; this time is therefore carefully supported to support children with transition both to and from Reception to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and their family, and that they settle into their new class quickly and happily. There are different ways in which we support the transition process as outlined below.

Parent Induction Meeting –

Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the Summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Reception curriculum. All parents will receive the school information guide, information leaflet about Reception and a copy of the Autumn Term Curriculum Map. The Safeguarding team and

SENDCo will be available to discuss any worries, concerns or matters arising to ensure plans are put in place prior to children's start date in September.

This is an opportunity for staff to:

- to go through daily routines and expectations
- explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- explain about holidays and absences
- explain the arrangements for the induction in to reception

Stay and play on Transition Day –

The whole school has a transition morning in July to enable the children to visit their new classroom and meet their new teacher. For our reception transition, we offer a stay and play opportunity throughout the morning for our new September intake. The children are given the opportunity to come into school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. They will spend time in their new class exploring the environment both indoors and outdoors. It is a great opportunity for them to try out some of the activities they will experience in Reception. This means that before they join their new class in September the Reception environment is a more familiar place to them.

Staggered September start –

When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply to support them in adjusting to their new surroundings:

- children will be inducted through several half day sessions, in groups, initially. They will then all attend for and have their lunch at school to introduce the children to the procedures around eating lunch in the school hall. Children will then move to attending fulltime unless school and family agree that a slower induction is needed due to the specific needs of their child.
- children will attend for the full school day unless Foundation staff and parents or guardians agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child

Visits to pre-school settings –

Staff will visit the children in the current pre-school setting to get to know the children and to gain an insight into their educational experiences. These visits will be arranged directly with the settings.

Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1) -

Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and wholeschool assemblies as well as sharing playtimes with the Key Stage 1 children.

During the summer term children will have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with their new

environment and routines. Children will experience stories read by their new teachers as a way of becoming familiar with their new environment. They will also visit their new classes and experience routines and expectations to prepare them for transition.

Safeguarding & Welfare -

'Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.' (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

At St Nicholas C of E Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage Revised 2021:

- to provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence
- to promote good health
- to manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- to ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so
- to ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for
- to maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children

Safeguarding Children –

St Nicholas C of E Primary School takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns, which a member of staff may have within the school, is recorded using CPOMS. Relevant people within the safeguarding team are notified and appropriate action is then taken based on the individual circumstances and nature of the concern.

The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The full Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available in school and on the school website for parents to read. All staff follow the school's Safeguarding policy and procedures and have annual training as well as additional training updates.

Keeping Safe –

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 encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on our website).

Good Health –

All children are provided with a healthy snack each day. Children always have access to water at lunch times and are encouraged to bring in their own water bottles to use during the day, which can be refilled when necessary.

Supported and Intimate Care –

Supported care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. Supported and intimate care tasks may include:

- dressing and undressing (underwear) i.e. during nappy changing, if they had a toileting accident, soiled from vomiting or when a child has become dirty or wet from involvement in play activities, for example; painting or water play
- helping someone use a toilet i.e. wiping their bottom.
- cleaning, wiping, washing intimate parts of the body i.e. for first aid or toileting accidents
- changing nappies – cleaning, washing, drying and applying cream to intimate parts of the body
- toilet training

Safeguarding of children during supported and intimate care and toileting will be adhered to by:

- Ensuring that staff are DBS checked and that all safer recruitment processes have been adhered to
- Encouraging children to undress and dress themselves as much as possible. Should help be needed, staff will first ask the child's permission before removing any clothes e.g. "Can I help you pull down your trousers?"
- Involving the child as far as possible in his or her own intimate care
- Ensuring staff are familiar with the school's safeguarding policy including the section on allegations against staff
- Ensuring all staff are up to date with their safeguarding training
- The school's safeguarding procedure and policy are followed at all times

Health and Safety includes:

- Staff to wear disposable gloves whilst changing a child
- Soiled clothing or underwear to be disposed of appropriately
- Toilet areas to be left clean
- Hot water and soap available to wash hands as soon as changing is done
- Paper towels/hand dryer are available to dry hands.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No supported care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins reception at our school. Should a child require supported care during the day, staff will ensure this is logged in class and reported to parents.

Behaviour –

Positive behaviour is expected and encouraged in Reception as within the rest of school. Each class develops their own promises to develop 'rights, respect and responsibilities.' We operate reward systems in the form of class dojo points and praise good behaviour and attitudes. Age-appropriate strategies are used to develop a safe and secure environment for learning. We use a whole school behaviour policy and approach to support and promote positive behaviour choices. The children are encouraged and praised for following the school rules.

Health and Safety -

All safety measures are taken to ensure the safety of all children in the Foundation Stage. Special locks are installed on the gates and doors. We follow the Create Partnership Trust's Health and Safety policy with which all staff and students are familiar and we have designated people responsible for first aid in school.

Within school we have members of staff who are trained in Paediatric First Aid. Children are taught the safe and appropriate use of equipment and materials. Children are taught to be mindful when moving around the school and are aware of safety issues. All medicines are kept in a locked cupboard at the school office if required and approved by the Head teacher and parents/carers before administration of any medicines (see our policy on medicines).

Equal Opportunities -

All areas of provision will be made accessible to all children regardless of age, sex, gender, creed, race, ethnicity, or ability.

Monitoring and Review -

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head teacher and SLT will carry out monitoring of EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

We also value external support from partners who work with our school.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or as necessary. To be reviewed: May 2024

Links with Other School Policies -

EYFS closely follows all relevant whole school policies including:

- Equal Opportunities

- Health & Safety
- Admissions
- Special Education Needs
- Behaviour & Relationships
- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Staff Handbook