

# Whole School Policy: EYFS



Policy	EYFS Policy
Date	May 2019
Date of review	May 2021
Signed Chair of Governors	<i>George Lopez</i>
Signed Headteacher	<i>Clare Scott</i>

***We, the family of St Peter's, united in faith by God strive to learn and grow together to be the best we possibly can every day.***

## Aims

Within the context of ensuring we meet Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Guidance (Feb 2018) which is available to download:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

## **We aim:**

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing confidence

## The Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in Development Matters (non-statutory which is available to download at:

<http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2012/03/Development-Matters-FINAL-PRINT-AMENDED.pdf>

This clearly defines what we teach.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2017: 1.3), they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas.

The prime areas are;

**Communication and Language** – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking

**Physical Development** – Moving and Handling and Self care

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Making relationships, Managing feelings and

behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are;

**Literacy** – Reading and Writing

**Mathematics** – Numbers and Space, Shape and Measures

**Understanding the World** – People and communities, The world and Technology

**Expressive Arts and Design** – Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities within the Nursery and Reception classrooms with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are;

**Playing and Exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

**Active Learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements

**Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

### **Teaching strategies**

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning.

The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing.

In some cases the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other

times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

By the Summer term in Reception the children will experience many more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to year 1.

### **Play**

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using interesting topics as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own.

They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own

level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions.

We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child-initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities is very important to us.

### **Teaching**

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in

helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. This looks different in the Nursery and Reception classes. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our topic work, Mathematics, Literacy, Phonics, and stories.

### **Planning**

Nursery and Reception both follow the Cornerstones curriculum to ensure children explore new themes during their time in EYFS.

Staff initially use medium term plans for the topic. They then plan in more detail on a weekly basis.

### **Visits and Visitors**

Visits and visitors are used to support learning. We aim to go on at least three visits by the time children leave Reception.

We rely on parental support on trips, aiming for a ratio of one adult for two children in Nursery and a minimum of 1:5 in Reception. For safety reasons we say no to younger siblings coming along on school trips.

Following the updates to the EYFS 2017 Framework regarding Paediatric First Aiders in the EYFS setting, A Paediatric First Aider is now always present on educational visits.

Visitors also really enhance a topic and we like to have 'experts' coming in to talk to the children, a police officer for example. We often ask parents if they are able (and brave enough!) to share knowledge or a skill, be it cooking or how to bath a baby.

### **Classroom organisation**

Our Early Years classrooms have defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. Each classroom is set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning. Classrooms have a writing area, maths area, creative area, book corner, role play area, construction/small world area, outdoor area and carpeted teaching area.

A variety of activities are planned for and set up in the different areas each day. The adults move to whichever area their focus for the session/day is.

The outdoor area is an important part of the classroom with many children choosing to learn outside for much of the day. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths game, reading and for construction. Physical activity often dominates, with climbing, running, cycling and other active games being key.

### **Assessment, Observations and Special Books**

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves all staff observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and

learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies: We collect of children's work, photos and observations in children's individual special books. Teachers and Nursery Nurses use iPads which is used to capture and note observations and next steps for learning. In Reception, children's work is recorded in exercise books in addition to their special books

Parents have access to the special books and exercise books during termly parental consultations. They are encouraged to contribute to special books through the use of termly questionnaires regarding their children's progress.

On entry to Nursery and Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. Throughout the Early Years the Class Teacher submits end of term assessment data to the show each child's development across the seven areas of learning.

At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'.

Children's end of year levels (Nursery and Reception) are also communicated to parents and carers in the end of year report and can be discussed in the final Parents' Evening.

### **Role of Staff**

The class teacher is the named key worker for each child in the setting. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents. All adults within the Early Years setting actively seek to form positive respectful relationships with the children in their care.

There are rare occasions when significant adults cannot be in the class and we aim to be consistent in who covers these absences.

### **Partnership with Parents and Carers**

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting.

As well as the Nursery and Reception visit days we offer a Meet the Teacher session at the beginning of the school year and offer parenting workshops and other sessions for parents.

### **Health & Safety and Safeguarding**

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.

We follow our school Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (which can be found on our school website) alongside the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (Feb 2018) which is available to download:

In addition:

- Members of staff are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. Members of staff do however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's special books, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.
- We have a kitchen in the Nursery which no child is allowed to enter and is secured with a safety gate and a door.
- We take all accidents seriously and always send a letter home if a child bangs their head. We have cold compresses stored in the Nursery freezer.
- We encourage all children to start school without nappies but will support any children struggling with this. We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' (i.e. wet themselves!) and have stocks of spare clothes and change anyone who needs it. We ask parents to help keep our stocks of clothes high by returning anything their child has borrowed. Children are changed in the open area outside the toilets in each classroom
- All large climbing equipment is checked by our site officer and fire alarms are held regularly in line with whole school policy
- Daily risk assessments of the outdoor area are conducted by Nursery Nurses and Teaching Assistants and any dangers; animal faeces, rubbish, etc is removed before children go out
- Clare Scott (Headteacher), Gail McBride (Deputy Headteacher) and Marie Hazelton (SENCo) are the named designated safeguarding officers and all concerns are shared with them (see Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy)
- We have separate policies for medicine in school and off-site visits