

Early Years / Foundation Stage Policy



Headteacher

March 2025 Review: (every 3 years) 2028

Introduction

The first year of school is a unique and special time in every child's life and needs to be valued as such. This policy has been written to reflect Trinity St Stephen Church of England First School's philosophy in relation to the education and well-being of all children in our Reception Class (Foundation Stage 2). This policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Guidance, the EYFS Curriculum statement and the EYFS Progression Overview.

Aims

We aim to:

- provide a welcoming and nurturing environment for children and their families.
- ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued.
- establish positive relationships with parents.
- keep parents well informed about the curriculum and their child's progress.
- build on what the children already know and can do.
- help children make links in their learning.
- stimulate positive attitude and dispositions to learning.
- encourage independence.
- value children's interests, providing a balance of direct teaching and child-initiated activities.
- provide a solid foundation in the six areas of learning through well-planned, rich and stimulating experiences.
- make careful observations in order to support and extend children's learning appropriately.
- ensure that children with special educational needs are identified and receive appropriate support.

Planning

- Long term planning: Yearly cycle of topics
- Medium term planning: cross curricular topics based on the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. Medium term planning is reviewed before the start of each topic and as an ongoing process throughout (see below).
- Short term planning: Weekly plans incorporating the six areas of learning taught through adult directed activities, child-initiated activities and continuous play provision based on objectives from Foundation Stage Curriculum. Weekly planning is informed by continuous observation of the children during both adult directed and child-initiated activities. The main learning activities are evaluated at the end of each week.
- Daily Activities and Challenges: child-initiated activities based on objectives from Foundation Stage Curriculum and informed by observation and assessment of the children

- Phonics Planning: Weekly planning for discrete, daily phonics sessions

Learning and Teaching

The features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- A Partnership between Foundation Stage staff and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
- Ensuring that good quality teaching of phonics is a central part of learning.
- The use of good quality resources including a focus on good quality early reading materials
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other methods of communication
- A planned curriculum that helps children achieve and extend the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage
- Providing children with activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
Making careful observations of the children and using these observations to inform planning thus supporting and extending the children's learning
- Encouraging all members of the Foundation Stage team to make contributions towards the monitoring and observations of the children and to discuss any issues that arise during the weekly planning session
- Incorporating the language of learning and thinking into all classroom activities and encouraging the children to use the same language in their daily discourse

Play

Play is the prime medium through which young children learn. Play can engage the child's whole being, physically, mentally and emotionally. Through play, children explore and develop learning experiences which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

This should be in line with and read in conjunction with the schools assessment policy. Assessment takes place in the following ways:

- observations carried out while children are engaged in all activities, in order to gain insight into children's interests and what they can do independently.
- observations carried out during focused individual/ group work / whole class teaching in order to assess children's level of understanding related to specific skills and concepts.
- discussions with children about their learning and next steps.
- summative assessments carried out throughout the year to monitor and track children's progress and to inform future planning with regards to phonic knowledge, writing and mathematical development.
- on entry (Baseline) and end of year

All Foundation Stage staff are involved in the observation of the children.

The children's attainment, achievement and progress are recorded in the following ways:

- individual Learning Journals
- completion of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile half termly via an excel spreadsheet
- minutes of pupil progress meetings held termly with the headteacher
- phonic assessment records
- reading records
- end of year PUMA (mathematics) and PIRA (Reading)

The children's attainment, achievement and progress are monitored at regular intervals throughout the year through data analysis. This analysis is then used to inform future planning and intervention groups. The children's attainment and progress is reported in the following ways:

- two parents' evenings throughout the year.
- An annual written report
- Regular informal daily contact with parents
- Informally with parents when concerns are raised either by school or parents/carers

Teachers assessment is moderated on a regular basis, either within the EYFS team, within the KS1 team or with EYFS teachers in the local authority.

Wherever possible we have contact with feeder nurseries for the transfer of information before the child starts school. This may include both academic and social achievement at

the end of Foundation Stage 1. EYFS profiles, teacher comments and assessment records are passed to the Year 1 staff at the end of the year.

The end of year EYFS profile data is analysed and shared with SLT, with any arising issues incorporated into the EYFS development plan and leadership planning for the next academic year.

Partnership with Parents

At Trinity St Stephen Church of England First School we feel that establishing a positive partnership with the parents of all children is important. We aim to do this in several ways:

- School prospectus and website
- Induction Evening for parents
- Information pack
- School visit for parents and children
- Weekly Class News and Termly Curriculum letters, half termly blog on the website showcasing learning
- Parents evenings – sharing children's records with parents
- Open door policy
- TSSSA – Parent Teacher Association
- Curriculum workshops for parents

Inclusion / Equality of Opportunities

We believe that all children matter and they are given every opportunity to reach their full potential.

- The Foundation Stage curriculum should be provided in such a way that the preferred learning styles and abilities of all pupils are taken into account.
- All pupils will be given equality of opportunities to access their entitlement of the Foundation Stage curriculum, irrespective of gender, ability or background.
- Pupils are entitled to receive an education, which builds upon their previous knowledge, understanding, skills and interests.

All Foundation Stage staff are involved in ensuring the welfare and safeguarding of the children in our Reception Classes.

Use of Mobile Phones

In order to protect both staff and children, mobile phones will never be used in the classroom to capture images of the children. During teaching times, any mobile phones will be stored in a locked cupboard.

Image recording and technology

Photographs are taken on a daily basis for evidence and recording learning. These are captured using school equipment. These photos are used within children's learning journals. Any photos or videos will only be downloaded to school computers. Photographs and videos will only be published on the school website with the advanced written consent of carers. Photos will be kept digitally until the end of the subsequent academic year, as they are treated as evidence of work in the same way that exercise books remain in school.

Uncontrolled when printed