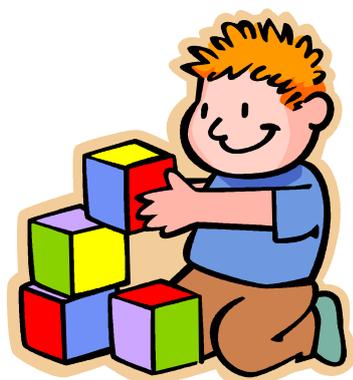


St Georges Church of England
Primary School

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age 5 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 Early Years Foundation Stage”
Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2014.

INTRODUCTION

Our Early Years policy describes the framework upon which the beliefs and practice at St. George's Church of England Primary School are based, this policy should be used in conjunction with the teaching and learning policy, assessment policy and S.E.N.D /Inclusion policy.

Our philosophy

At St. George's we believe that all of God's children are special and entitled to the very best start to their school life. We greatly value the important role that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development, both academically and spiritually. In the Foundation Stage, children learn best through play based activities and first-hand experience; they become independent learners through the balanced provision of child initiated and adult led experiences. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum which enables each child to develop emotionally, socially, morally, physically, creatively, and intellectually to their full potential and at their own pace. Each child is unique and is valued as an individual. We believe that the EYFS is a preparation for life and not purely preparation for the next stage of education.

Aims

- ◇ To provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning, which meets the individual needs and interests of the children.
- ◇ To develop warm and secure relationships between children and adults.
- ◇ To provide a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage document and Development Matters.
- ◇ To ensure that every child makes *at least* good progress.
- ◇ For the children to become aware of moral and social values.
- ◇ To encourage active learning through first-hand experiences both in indoor and outdoor play, and through both verbal and non-verbal communication.
- ◇ To encourage children to become self-motivated and independent learners with a positive attitude to learning and self-discipline.
- ◇ To value the cultural diversity within our school and community.
- ◇ To foster positive home school links and share a common sense of purpose with parents/carers.

The key persons are fundamentally the class teachers with a team of practitioners contributing towards the care and learning for the children and their parents/carers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. At St. George's this provision is for children from four to five years in our Reception classroom. All children begin school with a variety of experiences, knowledge and learning. It is the role of the early years practitioners to effectively build upon that prior learning and excite children with new knowledge and understanding. This is achieved by ensuring that parents/carers, early years practitioners and other professionals build positive relationships and work together to support all children's learning and development. The content of the curriculum within Reception is set out within

the EYFS document. Guidance is given on effective learning and teaching through the three Prime areas and four specific areas as well as Characteristics of Effective Learning:

Prime Areas:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Physical Development
3. Communication and Language

Specific Areas:

4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

Characteristics of Effective Learning:

The characteristics of effective learning demonstrate the child's capacity to be an active, persistent and creative learner across all areas. These characteristics of learning are categorised under three areas:

◇ Playing and exploring

Finding out and exploring, playing with what they know and being willing to 'have a go'.

◇ Active learning

Being involved and concentrating, keeping trying and enjoying achieving what they set out to do.

◇ Creating and thinking critically

Having their own ideas, making links and choosing ways to do things.

Judgements will be made about children's characteristics of learning throughout the year. This will be the basis for their end of year report and help provide the Year 1 teacher with information about how each individual learns best.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Objectives are taken from the EYFS Statutory Framework and the guidance in Development Matters. These statements of development lead up to the Early Learning Goals (ELG), which set out what most children will be expected to achieve by the *end* of the Foundation Stage. It is organised into seven areas of learning:

Communication and language

Children are exposed to a variety of experiences that will enhance their communication skills. They are encouraged to develop as speakers and listeners through all areas of the curriculum. Children will be expected to develop their use of Standard English within their own spoken language, alongside a respect for the diversity of dialect and an interest in other languages. Their listening and attention skills will also be assessed as will their expressive and receptive language.

- Listening and attention (ELG1)
- Understanding (ELG2)
- Speaking (ELG3)
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Physical development

Children will be involved in a wide range of first-hand experiences leading to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and concepts in early physical education. Concentration and perseverance will be encouraged as the children are introduced to the appropriate aspects of

the National Curriculum. A real interest in physical skills will be fostered. We will provide opportunities for all children to be active and interactive, to develop their coordination, control and movement, including using pencils for writing. Children will develop a basic understanding of how to be healthy and the importance of physical activity. They will learn to become more aware of taking and managing their own risks, thinking about health, safety and well-being.

- Moving and Handling (ELG4)
- Health and Self-care (ELG5)

Personal, social and emotional development

Children are taught to work both independently and as a sensitive member of a team. They are encouraged to concentrate and persevere, foster a real love of learning and demonstrate the ability to initiate ideas and solve simple problems. Children learn to develop a positive sense of themselves, learn how to manage their feelings and to have confidence in their own abilities. They will develop respect for the needs of others including those from cultures and faiths different from their own. They will learn what is right and what is wrong and how to treat all living things with care and respect.

- Self-confidence and self-awareness (ELG6)
- Managing feelings and behaviour (ELG7)
- Making Relationships (ELG8)

Literacy

Children will build upon their communication skills and physical skills to learn to read and write. Through listening to others read, children will begin to develop a love of reading; they will learn to appreciate the beauty of language and eventually learn to read themselves. Through the teaching of phonics children will learn to hear and say sounds in words which builds up to reading and writing simple words and sentences. Some words read will be non-decodable so they will be taught a variety of reading strategies by the end of the Reception year. Children will be encouraged to develop a cursive style of handwriting as well as independence in writing.

- Reading (ELG9)
- Writing (ELG10)

Mathematics

Mathematical skills and thinking, the use of mathematical apparatus and language and the development of reasoning skills will shape the scheme of work for children in the Foundation Stage. Children will learn to recognise and count with numbers up to 20. They will begin to use the language of addition and subtraction during practical activities and will learn to compare quantities. Children will also be introduced to the concept of doubling and halving. They will learn to name and describe shapes and explore size, weight, capacity, distance and time in play situations.

- Number (ELG11)
- Shape, space and measure (ELG12)

Understanding the World

In this exciting strand of learning, children will learn to question and will be given the opportunity to use focussed exploration and investigation skills using first-hand experience and simple secondary sources. We will guide children to make sense of God's physical world and their own community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about different people, places and objects. Children will learn to recognise and talk about

similarities and differences, patterns and change. Children will develop an understanding of respect and diversity through the sharing of different life experiences of past and present. Children will learn how technology can enhance learning and become competent in their use of ICT.

- People and communities (ELG13)
- The world (ELG14)
- Technology (ELG15)

Expressive Arts and Design

Children will be encouraged to recognise what is beautiful in the world and to develop their own creativity. They will explore and play with a wide range of materials and tools and be taught to reflect upon and adapt their work where necessary. Children will be provided with opportunities to regularly share thoughts, ideas and feelings through a range of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play and design and technology. Children will be encouraged to work individually and collaboratively when using imagination in their learning.

- Exploring and using media and materials (ELG16)
- Being imaginative (ELG17)

Religious Education

At St. George's we plan for the provision of R.E. and embed our school values through all areas of learning. Children are encouraged to talk about, explore and respect their own and others' beliefs through sharing ideas in a safe, reflective environment. They learn about Jesus and Christianity through a variety of bible stories, celebrations and play activities including Godly Play. Children will begin to foster an understanding about other faiths and will be encouraged to think about the similarities and differences between Christianity and other faiths.

PLANNING

Planning is undertaken by the practitioners to ensure progression through to the end of Reception. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is informed through observations that we have made of the children considering their current interests, development and learning.

Long Term Planning

This is based around six themes, but which are flexible and adaptable depending on current interests and experiences.

Medium Term Planning

Objectives are taken from the EYFS and are planned together by practitioners to ensure continuity and progression. Assessment opportunities and activities are also identified for each area of learning, including opportunities for technology.

Short Term

The objectives are broken down to include activities, differentiation, deployment of adults, assessment opportunities and key questions/vocabulary. Observations are on-going.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is a very important part of a child's development and the planning of the outdoor environment mirrors learning from indoors, usually on a larger scale. Children have access to outdoor learning every day. The outdoor classroom is securely fenced and provides a safe play space where children can develop in all areas of learning.

ORGANISATION OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

At St. George's we believe that the learning environment should stimulate, excite and extend the children whilst providing familiarity and security. We aim to create an attractive, welcoming learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. This is a place where children will feel safe, secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and take responsibility for initiating activities.

The inside and outside environments are demarked by specific learning areas as set out by the EYFS. A plan of provision in the inside and outside learning environments is displayed and regularly updated according to themes and interests of the time. At St. George's we recognise the significance and importance of a stimulating outdoor environment that mirrors that of the indoor. Children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor areas throughout the school day.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND MONITORING

Assessment and monitoring is undertaken through regular observations, discussions, photographs and planned assessments. These assessments are enhanced by observations and information provided from children's home settings, child minders and other nurseries. By the end of Reception the range of observations and assessments have provided the evidence for the individual child's EYFS profile.

On entry into Reception the children are assessed to form a 'baseline' of what they can do on entry into formal education. Through observation of carefully planned activities, parental and feeder setting contributions, a picture of each child's abilities in the Prime areas of learning is formed. The 'Baseline' data collected is used to track a child's progress both through Reception and then through school.

At the end of the Reception year children will be formatively assessed on the seven areas of learning against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG). This indicates the stage of development they are leaving at:

- ◇ Emerging (working **towards** the ELG and therefore below age expectation)
- ◇ Expected (working **within** the ELG)
- ◇ Exceeding (working **beyond** the ELG and therefore above age expectation).

A variety of methods are used to ensure that the progress of children is carefully monitored. These include:

- ◇ On-going assessment (adult led/initiated and child initiated) which is evidenced in individual learning journeys in **2Build a Profile**.
- ◇ Classroom Monitor is used to identify gaps in learning, target groups of children and track individual and group progress throughout the year.

ROLE OF ADULTS

Teamwork is extremely important within the Foundation Stage in order to support and extend the children fully in their learning. The Reception team aim to:

- ◇ Provide stimulating learning activities for all children.

- ◇ Focus on child involvement and interest.
- ◇ Provide focussed support and teaching for small groups and individual children.
- ◇ Monitor the progress of individual children and groups of children.
- ◇ Carry out observations of child initiated and adult led activities to extend and monitor learning. (approx.80% child led and 20% adult)
- ◇ Work with parents /carers in order to promote positive, trusting relationships.

Role of the Early Years Lead Teacher

It is the role of the Foundation Stage Leader;

- ◇ To organise the delivery of the Early Years Curriculum and to ensure progression and development.
- ◇ To monitor the planning and quality of delivery within the curriculum.
- ◇ To monitor the quality and effectiveness of observations in learning journeys.
- ◇ To keep abreast of all developments within Early Years and carry out INSET when required.
- ◇ To monitor and update resources.
- ◇ To liaise with and support Pre-school establishments within the Partnership link.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

At St. George's we believe that strong partnerships with parents are crucial. We understand that parents and carers are the child's first and most enduring educators and work to maintain and build upon these influences. Each child has a Home book that informs parents of what learning has been happening in school and also enables them to support their child's learning with ideas to try at home. Practitioners are readily available to speak with parents concerning their child's development.

We believe that parents and carers working together with teachers and support staff will have a positive impact on the child's development and learning. To reinforce this, we run different workshops across the year to inform and support parents in their child's learning and development, for example a Phonics and Literacy skills workshop.

Parent/Teacher meetings are held twice a year for parents to discuss children's progress and a written report summarising the achievements from the EYFS curriculum is sent to parents at the end of each year. As well as on-going daily dialogue with parents at the beginning and end of the school day, at St. George's School we operate an 'open door' policy where parents and carers can arrange to meet with their child's class teacher at any point throughout the year.

TRANSITION

Transition from Pre -school to full time Education

Our aim is to establish a smooth and successful transition to school. This is facilitated by:

- ◇ Visits to partnership pre-school establishments.
- ◇ Up to six pre-school sessions with their new teacher and support staff during the summer term.
- ◇ Liaison with outside agencies where needed.

- ◇ Handing over of pre-school assessments to give a clear baseline for the child when they start school.
- ◇ Considering the needs of individual pupils as they enter full-time education.

Reception to Year 1 Transition

Reception and Year 1 teachers work together to make the transition from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as happy and secure as possible. Towards the end of the Reception year children are given many opportunities to meet and work with the Year 1 teacher and support staff. The profile data is discussed with the Year 1 teacher so that they can continue to help the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals if they have not done so before they can access the Key Stage 1 curriculum.

DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOUR

In Foundation Stage we maintain a positive approach towards behaviour and have high expectations of the children. We follow the school's behaviour policy. We believe in setting positive models of behaviour for children, for example, in speaking politely to each other and to them, showing good manners at all times. We discuss with them appropriate ways of behaving in order to develop a caring and sharing attitude. We help them to understand the routine and expectations of a school environment. We believe that reinforcing good behaviour is preferable to sanctioning bad and we use a range of reward strategies including praise, rewards, stickers, certificates and verbally informing parents of positive choices and successes.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

All activities and practises are carefully selected to ensure the health and safety of all children and adults working in the Foundation area. Thorough risk assessments are undertaken as appropriate.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At St. George's School we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual.

For further information see Equal Opportunities Policy.

INCLUSION

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning requirements.

For further information see Special Educational Needs Policy

This information will be reviewed annually.