

St. Peter's C of E Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Adopted by Governors and Staff: September 2021

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy.

Our Vision Statement

In our Early Years at St Peter's we believe in providing a safe and nurturing environment where children flourish and become independent, confident learners. We aim to develop the whole child, socially, emotionally, creatively, physically, academically and spiritually so that they are able to reach their full potential.

We see each child as unique and strive to ensure that our children are constantly learning and developing resilience as they tackle our practical, challenging and child-initiated curriculum. We aim to create a stimulating and engaging provision that develops the children's curiosity, problem solving skills and love for learning.

Within our dedicated staff team we truly value partnerships with parents and carers and encourage parental involvement with all that we do. Together we are committed to giving our children the best possible start to their school life and equipping them for success in the future.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St. Peter's C of E Primary School, children join the Reception class in the year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children "learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe." We aim to give "children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life" and promote "teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness'." (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021 p.5)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. A unique child - developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
2. Positive relationships - supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
3. 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.
4. Learning and developing - An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

1. A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at

varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued at St. Peter's C of E Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted and differentiated to meet the needs of all children, groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that a child with an additional need is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the SENCo is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEN.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning in the moment 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 to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Welfare

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. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

"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." At St. Peter's C of E Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Toileting

Through training and guidance from the Nursing service we have developed a toileting and continence policy that ensures we protect the dignity of all children, parents and staff through our support with toilet training. (See separate policy.)

2. Positive Relationships

At St. Peter's C of E Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families as early as possible.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school through visits. Parents work alongside their child in school for some of the time before the child starts. We understand that each child is different and this transition may be longer or shorter for some children.
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during settling in sessions.
- support children through the transition from Nursery to Reception with a transition week. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children.

- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading and phonics.
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents three times a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and play sessions, celebration assemblies, school visits, craft afternoons, reading afternoons, celebration board;
- providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development which informs planning and provision. Celebration are also shared on Facebook.
- written contact through a home school diary if required as well as the acknowledgement that parents can ring school to contact key workers.
- ensuring all parents know that their child's teacher and teaching assistant are their key workers.
- by providing a quiet and confidential area where parents are able to discuss any concerns.
- relationships with families are developed through the initiative 'Early Words Together'. This is a supportive programme that encourages families to share stories, rhymes and activities together over a 6-week period.
- Planning in the moment - we ask parents to share with us achievements and relevant information of significant events, interests or milestones happening in their child's life. We then use this to chat with the children or use it to plan a learning experience for that specific child, gaining their interest as it is personal to them.

We adhere to the staffing to children ratios set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021, taking into account qualifications of staff members in each classroom:

- For children aged 2 there must be at least one member of staff for every four children
- For children aged 3 there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children
- For Reception aged children there must be no more than 30 children for each class teacher.

3. Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children

feel confident, independent, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment with continuous provision that children can independently access following their own interests and imagination. The provision has been planned so the children are independent in their own learning experiences.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual learning diaries. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

Through training on the benefits of 'loose parts' we have developed a large amount of open-ended resources for the children to access freely to stimulate their imagination and to challenge their thinking skills further. We have found that this develops the children's characteristics of effective learning skills in practical ways.

4. Learning and Development

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

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the SENCo in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

At St. Peter's C of E Primary School:

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. "Play is used as an essential

part of children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children prepare for year 1." (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2021)

Planning in The Moment - At St Peter's we use the philosophy of 'Planning In the Moment' this gives children the opportunity to be in charge of their own learning and development.

"Babies and young children are experiencing and learning in the here and now, not storing up their questions until tomorrow or next week. It is in that moment of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest - the 'teachable moment' - that the skilful adult makes a difference. By using this cycle on a moment-by-moment basis, the adult will be always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child's thinking (assessment), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's well-being and learning (planning for the next moment)."

From National Standards document Learning, Playing and Interacting P.22 - 23.

The adult goes to the child. The child is **NOT** called to come to the adult.

We work this way because high-level involvement occurs in child-initiated activity.

We offer a mix of child led and adult initiated experiences as set out in the statutory framework.

Our adults know the children very well and have a sound understanding of child development. This ensures that the adults enhance and extend the learning at the appropriate level.

Staff will consider the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At St. Peter's we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These 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; and

- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2021)

Religious Education is also taught in accordance with Redcar & Cleveland guidelines.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and Safety

At St. Peter's C of E Primary School, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2021, at St. Peter's C of E Primary School we undertake;

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- Each classroom has a snack and sink area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see accident and injury policy). As of September 2020, all Teaching assistants/some Teachers are first aid trained.
- The Learning Mentor is the named behaviour manager for the whole school with the EYFS leader/Assistant Head as the lead behaviour manager for the Early Years. (refer to Inclusions policy, behaviour policy, physical restraint policy)

- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy
- A safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use.
- We also complete daily safety checks of the outdoor environment to ensure that it is safe and ready for the children to access.

Transition

From Pre-Nursery to Nursery

Prior to the child beginning the Pre-Nursery Provision for 2 Year olds, the Ark, home visits or open sessions will be carried out by Foundation Stage staff. This allows the parents to ask any questions, or air any concerns they may have and the staff to get to know the children in a familiar environment. Start dates and times are staggered so the children settle in at their own pace, as we recognise each child is different and have individual needs.

Members of staff from the 2 Year old provision and Nursery then work closely together to support the children during their transition period. Children are taken into Nursery for visits with the Ark staff and are supported to become familiar with the new setting and staff.

From Nursery to Reception

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.
- During the summer term parents are encouraged to complete a transition project. It is used during the Autumn term to support transition and to inform planning.
- The children are invited to a week of visits to their reception class. One of these visits is with parents who are invited to an informal meeting with their child's teacher.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting.
- Nursery and Reception staff work together to share information in order to complete a Baseline assessment for each child during the Autumn term.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

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