

# St Andrew's C.E. Primary School

## Early Years Policy



### MISSION STATEMENT

We believe that St. Andrew's C.E. Primary School exists to provide life's main opportunities for our children guided by and learning from the example and teaching of Jesus Christ.

These opportunities come from an ethos and curriculum that provide maximum learning experiences for each individual child, no matter what their particular learning abilities may be.

We aspire to provide a curriculum which results in the enjoyment of learning, children who feel good about themselves and in which everyone can be good at something. We will encourage pupils to show tolerance and respect for each other, set themselves high standards, to take pride in their work and do their best.

We will provide curriculum enrichment activities including first hand experiences, creative opportunities, visits and visitors.

We will offer every child the chance to achieve as much as they are able. We will achieve high standards for all children, giving them secure foundations for future learning and success in life.

*Growing in Faith, Hope and Love. 1 Corinthians 13:13*

### Introduction

The Early Years policy at St Andrew's C.E Primary School reflects the value and importance of early education in the Foundation Stage. It provides a framework for staff which gives guidance on practice, and outlines procedures for planning, teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluating the curriculum. The Early Years curriculum is being developed in accordance with EYFS Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage which is a statutory key stage for children from the age of three to the end of the Reception year.

Early Years at St. Andrew's C.E Primary School refers to the foundation stage children in Reception class.

The policy reflects the Mission Statement of the school which states:

"We will achieve high standards for all children, giving them secure foundations for future learning and success in life."

The Early Years Policy addresses all aspects of the needs of young children and ensures that: Early Years education is valued, seen as the foundation for education and the beginning of a continuum of learning throughout the primary phase.

The curriculum experiences of children are appropriate to their age and stage of development.

- The identification of and provision for special educational needs of children are included.
- The importance of 'play', 'first hand' experiences and an active curriculum are recognised in planning learning opportunities for young children.
- There is shared understanding of the emotional needs of young children, how they learn and develop skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Policies and schemes of work include teaching and learning from the EYFS document.
- The needs of the children are considered carefully in matters of organisation, management and administration.
- Children experience a smooth transition from home, pre-school or nursery, into the reception class.
- In Reception all children are assessed during the third week of being at school.

### **Key Aims and Principles of the Early Years Policy**

Staff at St. Andrew's CE Primary School believe that the following aims and principles underpin their practice and reflect a shared vision of how children develop and learn, the activities and experiences which help children make progress, and the type of stimulating environment which promotes opportunities for learning.

#### ***The aims of the Early Years Curriculum are:***

- To provide a happy, safe, secure and stimulating environment with opportunities for children to enjoy learning, develop confidence and self-esteem, and build good relationships with others.
- To support, foster and develop children's personal, social and emotional well-being.
- To build on what the children already know, understand and can achieve.
- To enable pupils to express preferences, communicate needs, make choices, make decisions and choose options that other people act on and respect.
- To value parents/carers as important partners in their children's learning.
- To address the individual needs of all children by enabling them to participate in a broad, balanced, relevant and age appropriate curriculum, with due regard to equal opportunities.
- To promote the moral, spiritual, cultural, intellectual and physical development of children.
- To develop positive attitudes and dispositions for learning.

#### **Early Years provision, organisation and the learning environment:**

Early Years provision at St. Andrew's C.E Primary School is organised into a Reception class of pupils aged 4-5. A range of indoor/outdoor equipment and resources are available to meet the needs of the children in the early years and the children also have access to other equipment and facilities throughout the school, e.g. hall, library etc.

Reception children are admitted in September each year on a full-time basis.

The staff teaching children in the Foundation Stage have specialist training, knowledge and expertise working with young children and work with KS1 staff and other professionals e.g. Educational Psychologists, School Nurse, Behaviour Support Service and Speech Therapists.

Teaching and learning in the early years curriculum is carefully planned and structured to meet the children's needs.

Staff organise a range of experiences and opportunities based on 'real' events, which give children chance to make decisions and choices, work individually or in groups and explore the learning environment.

### **Induction**

All the children who are due to start school are visited at their pre-school setting in the Summer term to meet with the children and their key workers prior to starting school. The children and parents are invited to visit school for a play and stay session after a school day in June with their parents. They will also be able to attend a half - day session in July before the children are due to start school in September. This is to enable the children and parents to familiarise themselves with their new teachers and surroundings. In addition parents/carers will have the opportunity to attend an induction meeting where they will view a short presentation about St Andrew's and have the opportunity to discuss any concerns they may have. At this meeting the head teacher, school staff, Out of School Club, school kitchen staff, administration staff, members of the PTFA are all available to talk with parents/carers. This enables parents/carers to share valuable information which can help make a smooth transition from home to school. At this meeting each parent/carer will receive a detailed information pack about school. This provides useful information concerning uniform, dinners, school routines and the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. There is also an 'All about me' book which parents/carers and children are encouraged to bring to school on their first day in school in September.

When the children start school, all parents/carers are welcomed into the Reception classroom with their child. They have the opportunity to support and assist their child with the school routine for the first week whilst all the children are coming into school. The children will finish school at 3.15pm for the first few weeks. This prevents any unnecessary anxiety and alleviates the volume of children leaving school at the same time. The children are collected at the classroom door every home time or they are collected by a member of staff to go to OOSC after school. Generally, parents will spend the first 10-15 minutes with their child before leaving them and returning later to collect them. This is of course optional and parents may leave their child straight away. Once the children are settled we encourage them to come into school independently via our Infant class door. They will be greeted at the door by a member of staff.

**Parents/Carers as Partners:** We value the involvement of parents in school. Parental involvement with school begins even before children start Reception with an invitation to visit the school and meet their child's teacher. Parent consultation meetings are held in the

Autumn and Spring Term at which parents are invited to discuss their child's progress. A report is sent out at the end of the Summer term and parents are invited into school to discuss this report if they wish. If their child has Special Needs they will be encouraged to have a third Parents Meeting after their report to discuss the child's progress further. It is important to stress that if parents are concerned in any way about their child they should telephone or call into the school to make an appointment to discuss their concerns with the class teacher or a member of senior management. Parents are kept informed of all happenings in the school by regular newsletters/text messages. Parents are invited to various assemblies and functions throughout the year, including a 'New Parents Night' before the children start school and a 'Reading Meeting' in the first term.

### **Photographs/ Videos**

At the beginning of the year parents/carers are asked to give permission for their child to be photographed/videoed during their time at school. We use these images in the classroom, on displays, in the children's individual learning journeys and on the school website.

**Safeguarding:** The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns which the school has will be noted and, if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant agency. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available for parents.

### **The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a curriculum from birth to five years old, we follow the strands set by this curriculum and concentrate the learning opportunities on the seven areas of learning (3 Prime and 4 Specific) which are;

#### **Prime:**

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

#### **Specific:**

- 1. Literacy**
- 2. Mathematics**
- 3. Understanding the World**
- 4. Expressive Art and Design**

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Through play and practical experiences children learn about the world and their place in it. They learn through first hand experiences, talk, books and equipment. We set realistic yet challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development:** The school fosters and develops relationships between home, school, children's centres and places of worship in order to make links stronger for the good of the community as a whole. Children are encouraged to learn to

work, share, take turns and co-operate with others. They are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. They are also encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and to respect other cultures and beliefs. Children are enabled to become confident and develop a positive self-image.

**Physical Development:** Children are given opportunities to move to music, use equipment, develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills. They develop an increasing understanding of how their body works and what is needed to be healthy. This is done both indoors and outdoors and by working with a wide range of resources. The children receive twice weekly, hour long PE sessions delivered by EYFS staff and occasionally an outside specialist coach.

**Communication and Language:** This covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundation for literacy skills. Children's developing competence in speaking and listening is focused on. We aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role-play and group discussions. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as working with puppets, participating in music sessions and saying rhymes and singing songs together.

**Literacy:** We have a variety of resources for the children to use to help them develop early literacy skills. Children are encouraged to use the mark-making areas indoors and outdoors independently, but they also take part in teacher-led activities. These activities include whole class shared reading, phonics sessions and small group guided reading and writing. The pre-writing work encourages correct pencil control, left/right orientation and cursive letter formation. Children have the opportunity to develop their writing skills in accordance with their age, ability and competence. We encourage children to treat books and other resources with respect and they are given many opportunities to listen to stories told by the staff.

**Mathematics:** We aim for children to achieve mathematical understanding and a firm foundation for numeracy. This is achieved through practical activities and using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas. Children are given the opportunity to learn about number, shape, space, position, pattern and measurement. Children will start learning to tell the time and are given opportunities to learn about money and use simple calculations. Children will be encouraged and sufficiently challenged to further develop their understanding of mathematical concepts and number work skills in preparation for 'Big Maths' further up the school. (year 1 onwards)

**Understanding of the World:** All children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate, experiment and make decisions. They will learn about living things, their environment, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives. As well as having access to laptops within the continuous provision, children are given the opportunity to explore other modern technology. In addition to this children are also given opportunities to develop computing skills in set lessons on a fortnightly basis with a specialist teacher.

**Expressive Arts and Design:** We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama, movement, dance and imaginative play activities. Children are given opportunities to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and use basic musical instruments. Children also learn new songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other. During various times of the year children are given the opportunity to participate in the school nativity and class assemblies.

**Outdoor play:** We have an outside learning space which children have access to each day. We have all weather clothing and parents are asked to provide wellington boots so children are protected and there are no barriers to learning. The outside area is an extension of the classrooms and there is a variety of resources to facilitate learning. In this area EYFS staff will provide planned activities for children as well as giving the children opportunities to make their own choices.

**SEN:** Children who are finding aspects of the curriculum difficult are identified from teacher assessment if these difficulties have not yet been picked up at nursery. Individual Education Programmes are then set up and parents are kept fully informed at review meetings of their progress. Other agencies may be contacted in order to arrange additional support for these children, such as the school nurse, speech therapy, the education psychologist and behaviour support.

**Planning, assessment, recording and reporting in the Early Years Foundation Stage:**

Planning, assessment, recording and reporting are recognised as essential parts of an effective curriculum. The procedures followed by staff are outlined in the relevant whole school policy documents. The Reception children are assessed in the Autumn Term on entry to school and their progress is monitored through the year and compared at the end of the Summer term. Thereafter assessments are made half termly in the core subjects.

In addition, for Early Years, the following applies:

Topics covered by the reception class children through the areas of learning are planned with regard to the whole school curriculum map and those covered by children in KS1 and include...

- Interesting, enjoyable, challenging and relevant learning experiences, both inside and out, within the six areas of learning.
- Learning experiences that take account of the life experiences of the children, the characteristics of the community and the concerns of children's families.
- Learning which uses a multi-sensory approach.
- Learning opportunities which enable children to make connections between areas of learning and transfer and consolidate their learning across the curriculum.

The Early Years Curriculum is planned as units of work or 'topics' which provide a framework for planning and determine what is taught and when it happens. They are based on the Early learning Goals provided in the Foundation Stage Curriculum Guidance and the staff's knowledge and understanding of how children develop and learn. They recognise that young children follow recognised patterns of development but that there is considerable variation

between individuals. These units of work give aims, learning objectives, learning outcomes, activities, specific vocabulary, teaching methods, assessment opportunities and the resources necessary for the activity.

Long term, medium term and daily planning are in place and discussed and organised as a school. If you wish to see the Medium Term Plans for EYFS they are on our school website.

Weekly and daily plans include what children are to be taught in specific sessions, how staff are organised and how resources are to be used. Evaluation of activities, observation and staff listening to, and talking with children, are key strategies for gaining information on each child's progress and development.

In addition the staff use information from parents questionnaires, and the child's nursery or pre-school playgroup if available, plus their own observations and evidence in order to establish what each child already knows, understands and can do. This process of assessment provides a framework for future planning which then enables staff to meet child's future learning needs.

Recording pupil progress takes place in a variety of ways – skills assessment, observation, focused activities, questioning and discussion, these observations/records inform future planning and enable staff to meet individual children's needs. From September, 2019 we will begin to use Tapestry to complete observations. Assessments are also the basis for reporting to parents annually through a written report. These assessments and observations are kept in individual learning journeys, either shown as photographic evidence, verbatim written notes and/or examples of children's work. Children are tracked using a Progress Tracker, which predicts where children should be at a certain time during the year, also expected progress beyond the Foundation Stage. These learning journeys are available to children and parents/carers twice a year at parents evening and can be requested at any time. The children enjoy looking at their learning journeys at frequent times throughout the year.

Monitoring and evaluation procedures are as stated in the Teaching and Learning Policy and the Assessment Recording and Reporting policy.

This Policy will be reviewed annually.

June, 2023

J Hunter