

St Andrews CE Primary School

Early Years Policy



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Statement of Intent

At St Andrews CE Primary School, we greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year (5 Years of age). At St Andrew's CE Primary School we cater for children from the age of 3, however, we understand the importance of a child's development prior to their time joining us here.

"Children learn and develop more from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives. If children are at risk of falling behind the majority, the best time to help them to catch up and keep up is in the early years. Every child can make progress, if they are given the right support." (DfE Development Matters Revised 21, pg 6)

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning throughout our school. These features equally apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS.

Within the EYFS the development of a holistic learner is recognised based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to our Christian values.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's readiness for the next stage of their education and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

1. Roles and responsibilities

- The Governing Body has the overall responsibility for ensuring there is a policy in place to safeguard children that includes an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child, the use of mobile phones and cameras, and staff safeguarding training requirements. These issues are addressed in part in this policy and in further detail in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- The Governing Body has the overall responsibility for ensuring there is a policy in place in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (including supply staff) or a volunteer. These issues are addressed in the school's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.
- The Governing Body has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- The Governing Body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- The EYFS lead, in conjunction with the headteacher, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers, are responsible for remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.

2. Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to;

- plan exciting and engaging activities in accordance with the statutory framework and guidance materials.
- provide a broad and balanced Early Years curriculum based on first hand experiences and purposeful interactions, through carefully planned adult or child-initiated activities that follow their interests, whilst having a regard for the skills and attitudes the Key Stage One curriculum will demand.
- instil the Characteristics of Effective Learning such as independence, resilience and confidence.

- give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- work alongside parents to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.
- support children in developing a strong Christian ethos and promote the use of Christian values in everyday life.
- provide a broad and balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- work in partnership with parents.
- plan challenging learning experiences, based on our creative curriculum and individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
- provides a safe and secure learning environment.
- Allow children to develop to their full potential within a learning environment that allows for the characteristics of effective learning to take place.

3. Implementation

The EYFS curriculum is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development. This involves the effective implementation of;

- A carefully planned curriculum which aims for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS.
- Creating adult and child-initiated opportunities that will encourage children to explore, create, investigate, rehearse, practise, repeat and discover
- Developing Characteristics of Effective Learning
- Using a multi-sensory, play-based approach
- Having high expectation of children's behaviour and attainment.
- Recognising the importance of emotional well-being.
- Being outside as much as possible ensuring children take ownership of their learning

In partnership with parents, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

The EYFS provision and practice is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development with effective links to our Year 1 curriculum. Learning and development in school are planned to reflect these interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two important and interconnected sections – prime and specific:

The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

- Communication and language:
 - Listening, attention and understanding
 - Speaking
- Physical development:
 - Gross motor skills
 - Fine motor skills
- Personal, social and emotional development:
 - Self-regulation
 - Managing self
 - Building relationships

The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

- Literacy:
 - Comprehension
 - Word reading
 - Writing

- Mathematics:
 - Numbers
 - Numerical patterns
- Understanding the world:
 - Past and present
 - People, culture and communities
 - The natural world
- Expressive arts and design:
 - Creating with materials
 - Being imaginative and expressive

Each area of learning and development will be implemented through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.

The school will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through friendly and positive interaction.

Activities are planned with regard to three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things.
- Active learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Through a thorough induction process from either a child's home or a previous childcare setting, we ensure their prior learning and development is valued and the transition into school is supported.

Curriculum Planning

All planning derives from our early years progression document and takes place on three levels, long term, medium term and short term. Our EYFS planning takes into consideration the Year 1 curriculum where appropriate whilst still ensuring accurate and appropriate coverage of both the Early Learning Goals and Development Matters objectives.

- Our long term curriculum plans detail the intended coverage of possible topics throughout our rolling programmes.
- Our medium term planning is completed termly and reviewed half termly highlighted which outcomes are intended to be worked towards.

- Short term weekly planning shows the activities and provisions that will be in place daily and the links this has with the learning outcomes. These are completed in greater detail to show the specific differentiated activities the children will access.

Planning may change as a result of observation and formative assessment throughout the week to ensure it is flexible and meeting the children's interests and needs. All planning references the Early Learning Goals and 'Development Matters' as stated in the Statutory EYFS documentation.

4. Impact

In the EYFS children are learning when they: -

- Collaborate and learn from one another through shared experiences and sustained shared thinking
- Are supported to set their own challenges in their physical environment and in their learning
- Access resources independently
- Use their senses to explore and investigate
- Develop persistence and positive attitudes to learning as detailed in the Characteristics of Effective Learning
- Feel happy and supported

5. Play

We highly value play and the learning it brings in itself. Anyone who has observed play for any length of time will recognise that, for young children, play is a tool for learning.

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules thereby developing emotional resilience and self-regulation.

"Pretend play gives many opportunities for children to focus their thinking, persist and plan ahead." (DFE Development Matters Revised 2021, pg. 11)

Children have the opportunity to think creatively and problem solve alongside others. They express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations as well as re-enact positive experiences building self-awareness and self-esteem.

6. Inclusion

- All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender.
- The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.
- The Equal Opportunities Policy ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible.
- SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school's SENCO.

7. The learning environment and outdoor spaces

A rich and varied 'enabling' environment is actively planned for and continuously developed with varied multi-cultural and inclusive resources to encourage exploratory play-based learning and challenge. The learning environment encompasses both indoor and outdoor provision, which are of equal importance. Children are encouraged to experience all areas of the learning environment in all weathers. We encourage children to plan their own selection of activities balanced with adult initiated activities.

We aim to;

- Ensure the classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment.
- Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and daily outdoor activities are planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.
- Provide toilet facilities available to the EYFS with suitable adaptations for when needed.
- Changing facilities located near the Rubies Class with a supply of appropriate spare clothing kept near the toilet areas.
- Children have access to a quiet reflection area for prayer, age-appropriate bibles and Christian literature.

8. Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.

Parents will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and the EYFS lead will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents.

Ongoing formative assessments are used to assess the day-to-day learning and development of children in the EYFS. Practitioners interact and observe children to understand their interests and learning needs, and will use this information to inform practice and provision for each child.

The EYFS setting will undertake a summative assessment of the level of each child's development at certain stages. These are:

- Reception Baseline Assessment – a short assessment which is taken within the first six weeks of a child starting reception year.
- The EYFS Profile – a comprehensive assessment completed at the end of the EYFS to provide a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the early learning goals (ELGs), and their readiness for Year 1.

The school reports EYFS Profile results to the LA when these are requested. The LA is under a duty to return this data to the relevant government department.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to the assessment process for children with SEND as appropriate.

The EYFS lead will discuss any cause for concern in a child's progress with the child's parents, and our school SENCO, Nicola Richardson, especially where this concern relates to the prime areas of learning. A strategy of support will be agreed upon and consideration will be taken as to whether the child may have SEND which requires additional support.

The school takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with EAL to use their home language in play and learning whilst also ensuring that these children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English. During assessment, if it is found that a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, the EYFS lead will contact the child's parents to establish their home language skills to establish whether there is cause for concern about a language delay.

Assessment procedures are carried out rigorously and thoroughly to ensure children are making appropriate progress and are supported effectively.

9. Safeguarding and welfare

- All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well.
- Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.
- The DSL is Steph Burgoyne.

- The deputy DSL is Nicola Richardson, Michelle Bainbridge, Beth Haycocks, Sue Lewis and Julie Forsyth.
- The DSL is responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate.
- The deputy DSL will undertake the duties of the DSL in their absence, but overall responsibility for safeguarding will remain with the DSL.
- The DSL and deputy DSL will undertake child protection training as required.
- Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect

10. Staffing

A robust Recruitment Policy is in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable.

Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.

Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.

All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be supervised by the EYFS lead.

The supervision will provide opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
- Identify solutions to address issues.
- Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.

The EYFS lead holds at least a full teaching qualification with QTS, alongside at least two years' experience working in an early years setting. At least half of the other EYFS staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

- Steph Burgoyne will provide cover for the EYFS lead in their absence and is deemed fully qualified to do so by the EYFS lead and headteacher.
- There will be at least one member of staff on the school premises at all times who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate.

- Any member of staff who has sole responsibility for looking after a group of children will also hold a PFA certificate.
- All newly qualified staff with a level 2 or 3 qualification will be PFA trained where appropriate.
- The school will organise PFA training to be renewed every three years.
- The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found in the school entrance.
- The school provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.
- Only members of staff with level 2 English and maths qualifications will count towards the staffing ratios at level 3.

Ratios for staff are;

- Where a staff member with qualified teacher status (QTS), early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, there is one member of staff for every 13 children, and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- Where a member of staff does not hold QTS, early years professional status, or another suitable level 6 qualification, there is one member of staff for every eight children. At least one staff member holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification, and at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.
- Only under exceptional circumstances, and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained, will changes be made to the ratios.
- Parents will be informed about staffing arrangements and, when relevant and practical, will be involved in staffing arrangement decisions.

11. Information and records

Information is stored in line with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and with regard to the school's Data Protection Policy.

The following information is recorded for each child:

- The child's name and date of birth
- The name and address of every parent or carer who is known to the school, and which parent or carer the child normally lives with
- The emergency contact details of the child's parent or carer

The following information about the school is recorded:

- The school's name, address and telephone number
- The school's certificate of registration
- The name, address and telephone number of anyone who will regularly be in unsupervised contact with the children
- A daily record of the names of the children being cared for in the school, their hours of attendance, and the names of each child's key person

The following information is made available to parents:

- The school's privacy notice for parents and pupils
- How the school delivers the EYFS and how parents can access more information
- The daily routine and the activities offered in the school's EYFS and how parents can assist their child's learning at home
- How the school's EYFS supports children with SEND
- Information about the policies and procedures in place in the school's EYFS

Ofsted will be notified if there are any changes to the following:

- The address of the school
- The school's contact details
- The hours during which care is provided
- Any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of the school or any person who cares for, or is in regular contact with, children to look after children

12. Parental involvement

We firmly believe that the EYFS cannot function without the enduring support of parents.

- Parents are invited to regular parents' evenings; however, the school has an open-door policy and parents are welcome to talk to teachers at the start and end of the school day.
- The headteacher's office or telephone conversations will be utilised for confidential discussions between staff and parents.
- Parents are asked to sign permission slips for any visits out of school, use of photographs of their child and using the internet at school.
- Parents are asked to complete admission forms, a medical form and to write a brief synopsis about their child to help the school to understand their character and personality.

- We will use Seesaw as our platform to share daily interactions and work with parents and children. Permission must be obtained from parents prior to use.

13. Monitoring and review

- This policy is reviewed annually by the Governing Body and the SLT.
- Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.
- All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.
- The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2024**