



# **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

## Aims

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development; ∞ To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

The EYFS has one annual intake in September. Our Nursery has 31 places. Of which 21 are full time and 10 are part-time. Our Reception class offers 30 places. All children have to make a separate application to Reception and are not guaranteed a place having been admitted to the Nursery.

### Partnership with parents and carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting.

### Health & safety and safeguarding

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014)

Refreshments: A selection of fruit or bagels, water and milk are available for children throughout the day. Children are encouraged to be responsible for helping themselves to refreshments.

## The EYFS Principles

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

### A Unique Child

At St. Saviour's Primary School 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, displaying a variety of characteristics of effective learning. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use constructive praise and encouragement to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. We encourage a growth mindset in all pupils, providing a safe learning culture where children know that making mistakes is useful in helping us learn. All children's ideas and contributions are valued equally.

### Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be independent and confident by having secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with children and their families.

### Enabling Environments

At St. Saviour's Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's learning. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

### Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

## Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities within the Nursery and Reception classrooms with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics 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
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

## The curriculum

Areas of Learning: "All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected."

There are seven areas of learning and three of these are Prime Areas as detailed in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2014.

These are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

EYFS settings must also provide for the four specific areas of learning, through which the prime areas are strengthened and developed.

These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematical Development
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts 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 focused and child initiated activities.

### Teaching strategies

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible. By the summer term in Reception the children will experience many more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to year 1.

## Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities is very important to us.

## Planning

We believe many children need to be given a starting point to learn new things and find topics are a great way to fire the imagination. We have a two year topic cycle so both classes are working together on the same theme; topics are usually based on the following areas of learning, 'Understanding the World', 'Literacy' and 'Communication and Language'. The topics are flexible to ensure we also follow the children's interests, school themes and local or national events. The planning within the EYFS follows the school's Long Term Plan, with Medium Term Plans (MTPs) being written termly, which are based around termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning, however the teachers will most often alter these MTPs in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children.

## Teaching

We include direct, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and taken on.

## Classroom organisation

Our Early Years classrooms have defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. Each classroom is set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning. Classrooms have a writing area, maths area, creative area, book corner, role play area, construction/small world area, outdoor area and carpeted teaching area. A variety of activities are planned for and set up in the different areas each day. The adults move to whichever area their focus for the session/day is. The outdoor area is an important part of the classroom with many children choosing to learn outside for much of the day. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas. In Nursery, physical activity often dominates, with climbing, running, cycling and other active games being key. The Reception class has a smaller outdoor area so often have more physical play during break time, P.E. Each child has their own labelled peg and box in the cloakroom. We encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their clothes, book bag and work safely in one place!

## Assessment, observations and portfolios

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies all of which come together in their individual portfolio. Staff have their own iPad which is used to capture and note observations and next steps for learning. Parents have access to the portfolios which are stored in the classroom. They are encouraged to contribute through the use of our WOW cards. WOW cards are where significant events that happen at home can be recorded, they are available in each cloakroom and can be taken home to complete or can be completed with the support of a member of staff. Throughout the Early Years the Class Teacher submits end of term assessment data to the Head Teacher showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning. At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report and can be discussed in the final Parents' Evening in Reception.

### Nursery Learning Journeys

Nursery staff will informally monitor development and keep detailed records in the form of an electronic learning journal. This information is shared with families and either transferred to the reception team or to the child's new school. The Nursery team make a summative judgement 3 times a year, based on information they gather from learning journals and small group and individual assessments. This information is based on three categories - emerging, developing or securing within the appropriate 'Age and Stage' band for each individual child. Most nursery children are working within the 30-50 month stage. These are kept on a Foundation stage tracker.

### Foundation stage profile

Children continue to be assessed in the reception class where staff will add information to an assessment profile for each individual. The team make a summative judgement 3 times a year, based on information they gather from learning journals and small group and individual assessments. This information is based on same three categories as nursery - emerging, developing or securing within the appropriate 'Age and Stage' band for each individual child. Most reception age children are working within the 40-60 month stage. These are kept on a Foundation stage tracker. Insights will be shared at parent consultation meetings. Staff will continue to complete a learning journey book of photos and comments. Parents and carers are able to contribute to this document.

### Annual reports to parents

In the Summer Term, we provide a written summary of learning and progress for both Nursery and Reception children. The Reception report will also include children's progress against the ELGs and a written summary of their individual Characteristics of Effective Learning.

## Transitions:

- To the nursery  
Nursery staff conduct home visits during the summer term before their child starts school. We give each family an 'All About Me' booklet to complete with their child over the summer and this document is shared in the autumn term. Over the first few days at the school we encourage parents and carers to stay for as long as they wish in the classroom to ensure the transition to the school goes smoothly. We have a slow staggered entry into Nursery.
- To the Reception  
In line with the rest of the school the children starting in the Reception class will visit their new class during Transition Week during the summer term. Special book portfolios and data from the nursery and other settings are shared with staff.
- To Year 1  
Passing on data from the EYFS Profile, along with end of year reports to the Year 1 teacher during Handover meetings, where information about wellbeing is also shared.  
In line with the rest of the school the class will visit their new class during Transition Week during the summer term.

November 2015

Review date: September 2017

Ms. Clarke