

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Document Summary

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Amendment History

| Version | Amendment date | Author | Amendment Summary |
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| V1 | 5 th Sept 2022 | S Bradley | First Draft |
| V2 | 12 th October 2022 | S Bradley | Following comments from Governors |
| V3 | 31 st October 2023 | S Bradley | Updated to include Key Stage 1 rather than Year 1 & include review date |
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Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage extends from birth to the end of the reception year. Entry into St Michael's CE VC Primary School is usually at the beginning of the school year in which the children are five (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday). The EYFS is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. It is the EYFS Curriculum Guidance that sets out what is to be taught and the children are assessed against the EYFS profile at the end of their reception year.

Aim

At St Michael's CE VC Primary School, we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident, resilient and independent so that they develop a love of learning.

The EYFS is based upon four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every pupil is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

Principles into Practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced EYFS curriculum across the seven areas of learning using play as a vehicle for learning.
- Ensure safeguarding procedures are robust.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Work in partnership with parents.
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in both adult initiated and child-initiated activities.
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment both indoors and outside.

Organisation

We have an intake of 90 children split across three Reception classes. Teaching staff will plan together to ensure equal opportunities and provision across the three classes. The children will share the enclosed outdoor space and extended outdoor classroom area. There are outside doors from each classroom to enable free flow between rooms. The children are split to ensure an even mix of ages and gender across the three classes. Twins are usually split unless parents have a strong preference to keep the children together; a decision on this is made by the Head Teacher following a discussion with parents.

Teaching and Learning Styles

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in the school's Learning Policy.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents/carers that help our children to feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.

- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn and how this is reflected in their teaching.
- The range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, extends and develops the children's play, uses spoken or other means of communication.
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- Encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning and to develop independence and self-management.
- Support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and resources, both indoors and outdoors.
- Identification through observation of children's progress and future learning needs which are regularly shared with parents and carers.
- Good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school.
- The clear aims of our work and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve practice.
- The regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the EYFS.

Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

In the **Reception year**, the children follow the EYFS Framework. This builds on the child's previous experiences, with a strong focus on learning through play and exploring. We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observations of children's needs, interests and stages of development across seven areas of learning. Children's progress against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) are carefully monitored to enable them to achieve and exceed the ELGs.

Children's learning is developed through the **Prime and Specific Areas of Learning**:

The Prime areas of Learning:

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

The Specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts & Design

We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to 'free flow' between inside and outside spaces. Each area of learning and development is implemented through a mix of adult led and child-initiated activities. Planning and guided children's activities will take account of the different ways that children learn.

The **Characteristics of Effective Learning** describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. They run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes.

Key characteristics of effective learning:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate, experience 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.

Enabling Environment

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure, challenged and inspired. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Teacher assessment enables staff to change the learning environment in response to the learning needs of the children. Effective play-based learning builds and extends upon prior learning and follows children's interests. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning and increase challenge.

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We capture learning through a range of methods including observations, photos, examples of work etc. These are showcased in a class floor book. The children are able to look back at pictures of themselves and talk about the work they have done. Looking back through a floor book with a child is a really good tool to encourage the prime areas of development: Communication and Language; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; and Physical Development. It also builds a sense of pride for all the work the children have created together. These ongoing observations are used to inform the EYFS Profile/Birth to Five age bands and the Early Learning Goals. Progress is reviewed formally at least 3 times per year and shared with parents through parents' evenings, parent workshops and 'Stay & Play' sessions. Within the first six weeks of their formal schooling, the school takes part in the baseline assessment for all pupils able to access the assessment.

Parents as Partners

We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents and carers as we recognise that by working together we can have a more significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and very much encourage parents to participate in their child's learning.

We do this through:

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Encouraging parents to spend time in the class as volunteers to support children's learning and inviting them to a range of school events.
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher about any concerns.
- Providing a report at the end of the year on their child's progress and attainment.
- Inviting them to share and contribute to their child's learning through Class Dojo as well as via their child's reading record.

Safety and Welfare

At St Michael's Primary we consider the children's safety and welfare to be paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches the children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have policies and procedures in place to ensure children's safety. We promote the good health of the children in our care, provide nutritious food and follow set procedures when children become unwell or have an accident.

Please see separate policies on Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Child Protection, and Managing Medical Needs.

Inclusion

We value all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support

them at their own pace so that the majority of our children achieve or exceed the Early Learning Goals. The early identification of children with additional needs is crucial to enable us to give support and work closely with parents and outside agencies. See our SEND policy for further information.

Behaviour

In EYFS we appreciate that children are developing an awareness of themselves and others. The role of the adult is to guide and support each child to make appropriate choices in different situations. We promote a positive culture by:

- Ensuring the children are aware of our 3 school rules – Be Respectful, Be Ready, Be Safe.
- Providing opportunities within the school day to experience a variety of social situations.
- Rewarding positive choices as outlined in the whole school behaviour policy, the core Christian values in the school, PSHE, the use of immediate stickers when good choices are noticed.
- For unacceptable behaviour we follow the guidance in our school behaviour policy.

Transition

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

- Parents are invited to a Welcome Meeting in June to ensure they know about starting school.
- Members of staff make visits to or telephone preschool feeder settings and attend the South Gloucestershire Pre-school and School Transition Meetings.
- Our main preschool feeder settings make visits to school to attend the Nativity Play. All children and parents who have been offered a place at the school are able to attend the visits to the classroom that take place during the summer term prior to starting school.
- All parents and children are offered an appointment to meet with their class teacher and teaching assistant in the summer term prior to their child starting school.
- In Term 1 children have a staggered start for the first 3 weeks to enable them to adjust to school life. They attend school in the mornings until 12pm and each class takes a turn to stay for lunch until 1pm. In the afternoons Reception staff support in the Year 1 classes and teach alongside the children's new teachers.

From Reception to Year 1

During Term 6 of the Reception year the EYFS profile is completed for each child. Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. A copy of the profile is discussed with the Year 1 teacher. This is about each child's stage of development and learning needs. Year 1 teachers will visit the children in their class during the summer term and the children spend time in their new classroom during the whole school transition day. This period is used to prepare the children for the transition to Year 1 to enable them to settle quickly into their new class in September. In Key Stage 1 staff continue to plan continuous provision to support children's learning so that it mirrors the EYFS classroom. Provision is planned using the National Curriculum objectives to ensure progression throughout Key Stage 1 as well as the Characteristics of Effective Development from EYFS. Whole class teaching of Read Write Inc Phonics, English, maths and other curriculum subjects is taught with follow-up tasks taught in small groups.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed annually or earlier if necessary.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and all other curriculum, teaching and learning policies.

Related Policies:

Learning
Safeguarding and Child Protection
Managing Medical Needs
SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)
Health and Safety

To be reviewed February 2025