

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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St Saviour's C. of E. Primary School was founded by and is part of the London Diocesan Board for Schools (LDBS).

The school is to be conducted as a Church of England school in accordance with Cannon Law and the teachings of the Anglican Church and in accordance with the Diocese of London. At all times, the school is to serve as a witness for the Christian Faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

This Policy works in partnership with the SEN Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Admissions Policy, Behaviour Policy, Child Protection Early Years Policy and E-Safety Policy.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfill their potential.”

EYFS Statutory Framework 2012

INTRODUCTION

This policy reflects the values and philosophy of the Early Years' staff in relation to the teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage. It gives a framework and guidance within which all staff work.

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 kept healthy and safe.”* We aim to support children in their learning through *“teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life.”*

(Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2012)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

'Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured'.

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

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of challenges. All children at St. Saviour's School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school and believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best.

In the EYFS we set realistic and 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 from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- To make the child's first experience of school happy, positive and fun.
- To ensure that all children feel valued and secure in the Foundation Stage setting with positive relationships between carers and staff.
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe, supportive and enriched 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;
- A close partnership with parents.

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. 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.

Welfare

"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. Saviours we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012.

We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare 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 are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.

Inclusion/ Special Educational Needs (SEND)

All children and their families are valued at St. Saviour's 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 to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs 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 schools 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 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.

Positive Relationships

'Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships'.

Key Worker

EYFS Principle: 'Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/ or a key person'.

At St. Saviour's we recognise that children are happy and learn to be confident and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

We achieve this through regular parent meetings, half-termly parent teas and parent inclusion through the PTA and school functions. When children start at St. Saviour's in the Nursery they are appointed a Key Worker. They spend time with their Key Worker each day during group sessions and story times where good listening and communication skills are embedded. However, we endeavor that all our children get to know and build relationships with all the staff in the unit. In Reception, the class teacher acts as the Key Worker to all the children in their class with much support from their Nursery Nurse and assistants.

Foundation Stage Buddies

At St. Saviour's we use a Buddy system to support each child and promote PSED. During their first year in Nursery the children play with the Year 5 children and begin to form friendships. In the Summer term, in our special 'Buddy Assembly' Nursery and Year 5 buddies are matched together, following much observation from the teaching staff. Following this, the Nursery and Year 5 buddies go on a trip to the pirate playground where parents of the buddies have an opportunity to meet and get to know one another. The buddy system continues on into Year 6 where the system is even more beneficial. Year 6 Buddies meet and take their Reception Buddy into the Playground at the beginning of the day, helping the younger children to settle into their new routine. "Buddy bonding" is a highlight of the week for both the Year 6 and Reception buddies!

The system works well and supports learning in PSED and Communication and Language for both the EYFS children and their older buddies.

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:

- Meeting with parents to talk about their child before their child starts in our school through dedicated Nursery home visits and school open days (home visits are also carried out for any new children starting Reception).
- Daily opportunities to talk with the Nursery staff and share information.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journey' books which are accessible in the classroom.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There are two formal meetings for parents throughout the year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a written report on their child's progress at the end of each school year.
- All parents have access to their child's learning and development through an individual account on 'Look@Me'. Parents can see photos with descriptions left by EYFS practitioners and have the opportunity to leave their own comments, reflecting upon achievements and experiences at home.
- Arranging activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between the child, school and parents: reading afternoons, performing in Church, Sports Day, local trips, coffee mornings, PTA events, activity days and so forth.
- Providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing parent observation sheets during their child's focus week, informing planning and provision.
- Written contact through individual email 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 and by providing a quiet and confidential area where parents are able to discuss any concerns.

- Weekly Nursery ‘Chit Chat’ news sent via email informing parents of children learning experiences that week and any other important information.

All staff involved in the Early Years unit aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. Observations and assessments are carried out together and EYFS profile judgments are made as a unit through weekly meetings and general discussions. It is important to us as a unit that all members of staff have input into the children’s planning, learning journals and assessments.

Enabling Environments

‘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 and parents and carers’.

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

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Planning within the EYFS follows the Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans which are based around half-termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning; however the teachers are encouraged to modify their plans in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. Each week a selection of children are ‘focus children’. The class teacher uses a focus plan for each of the children to follow their learning more specifically during the week and identifies clear next steps. This information ensures that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Early Years unit takes the form of observation and this involves all the staff within the unit. At the beginning of each academic year a baseline assessment is carried out in both Nursery and Reception across all 17 areas of learning.

Weekly observations are recorded primarily through our online assessment tool ‘Look@Me’, where we take photos using an iPod touch or iPad. Additionally, we use Learning Journals for special pieces of work, observations and examples of mark-making and writing. In September 2018 we will move to use an assessment tool called ‘Tapestry’ which has a video recording function.

Each child’s level of development is recorded against the assessment scales derived from the ELG's. We now use SIMs to track our data onto. Within the final term of Reception, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG’s, assessment scales and the three characteristics of effective learning. There is also a written report for Nursery parents in the summer term, again, providing a summary of the children’s progress against the ELGs.

The Wider Context

At St. Saviour’s the EYFS is part of the whole school. As a Christian school all the children from Reception attend Mass in church on a weekly basis and Nursery attend Special Services at the end of each term. All children learn about different cultures and the world around them.

Learning & Development

The Nature of Learning

Children learn through play which provides vital foundations for future learning. Play is the medium through which the EYFS curriculum is experienced by children, demanding concentration, perseverance, mental and physical effort. Young children learn by experience. They need to look, touch, smell, listen, taste and explore with a variety of play materials. Within the group, all children are supported in developing their potential at their own pace.

By means of developmentally appropriate activities and adult support, the curriculum leads to Early Learning Goals and prepares children to progress with confidence towards the National Curriculum. The Early Years Curriculum is an active learning programme, which recognises that learning is a social interactive process between the child, adults, materials and the environment.

The programme emphasises:

- Positive adult-child interaction
- A child-friendly learning environment in which children are free to pursue and develop their ideas and share their discoveries with others.
- A consistent daily routine
- Team-based child assessment

Key elements of this approach include a supportive climate in which control is shared between children and adults, a focus on children's strengths, i.e. what they can do, and know and a problem-solving approach both to work and dealing with social conflict. Throughout the day adults are able to focus on the unexpected and spontaneous and to look for opportunities to help children clarify their understanding and extend their thinking, for example, by offering additional materials which might help children broaden their goals.

The process of education is as important as the content of the curriculum, i.e. when the children are actively engaged in first hand experiences and are able to observe, explore and take risks, they are learning how to learn and are developing self-esteem and independence .

Quality of Teaching

This will occur when:

- The child's home background and language is valued.
- Play is recognised as an important tool for children to develop and reflect on their learning.
- There are plenty of opportunities for the children to talk about themselves and the world around them.
- They engage in first-hand experiences.
- Learning is well planned and the needs of the individual/group are the starting point.
- Children have access to a variety of indoor and outdoor activities.
- Resources are accessible to all pupils.
- Special needs are identified as soon as possible and the appropriate measures taken to support the child's learning.
- Partnership with parents and carers is positively addressed and is recognised as being vital to the development of the child.

Staff in the EYFS have 'EYFS Lanyards' which display the areas of learning to support their observation taking of the children.

Quality of Learning

This will occur when:

- Children are motivated and instructions are clear.
- Children are enabled to access materials independently and return them independently.
- Children have a pride in their work and have high expectations.
- They are encouraged to reflect on and evaluate their work and that of their peers.
- This evaluation is used to raise the standard of their work.
- Everyone is involved in the child's development (parents/carers/adults/etc).
- The materials are appropriate to the needs of the child and the learning experience.
- Transition between Early Years and Year 1 is smooth and reflective of the children's needs.

The Learning Environment

Our Early Years unit is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are 5 distinctive areas; Nursery (ground floor classroom and basement classroom); Reception (lower ground floor classroom); Nursery garden; and shared playground.

There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and located equipment and resources independently. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children to explore using their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 Areas of Learning (see below). Additionally, we have a sensory room in Nursery which includes a ball pit, sensory lights and sound boards.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and consider these in their practice.

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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.

Organising and Management

The daily routine involves carpet time, small and large group activities and tidy up time. Children make choices about their activities and recognise that learning is a social interactive process between child, adult, materials and environment. There is a balance of adult-led and child initiated activities, delivered though indoor and outdoor play. The adult's role during activity time is to observe how children gather information, interact with peers, and solve problems, to enter into the children's activities, extend and set up problem solving activities. Children are encouraged to put away materials independently. They are given the opportunity to evaluate and recall their work in a variety of ways:

- Recall and recount problems encountered.
- Draw pictures or show models.
- Describe the activities undertaken simply, e.g. in a sentence.

The Nature of Learning

The three '**prime**' areas:

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

The four '**specific**' areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

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

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Curriculum for the Foundation Stage should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

Communication and Language – Children will be given lots of opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical Development – Children will be provided with lots of opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children will be taught the importance of physical activity and make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development – We will help children develop a positive sense of themselves and others. They will learn to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; they will develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings and understand appropriate behaviour; and children will become confident in their own abilities.

Literacy – Children will be taught to link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest.

Mathematics – Children will have lots of opportunities to develop and improve their skills of counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating addition and subtraction problems. They will be taught to describe shapes, spaces and measures.

Understanding the World – Children will be guided to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design – Children will explore and play with a wide range of media and materials as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

Transition from Reception to Year 1

During the final term in Reception, judgements are recorded for each child in all 17 areas of learning. Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, 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.

Paediatric First Aid

Adapted from the Statutory EYFS Framework:

(https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/03/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf)

At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate must be on the premises and available at all times when children are present, and must accompany children on outings. The certificate must be for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A. Providers should display (or make available to parents) staff PFA certificates or a list of staff who have a current PFA certificate.

All staff in the EYFS Team have completed the paediatric first aid course for EYFS practitioners and this is kept up-to-date.

Staff Development

All staff in the EYFS Team are encouraged to share best practice and attend any relevant CPD offered via the LDBS or Tri-borough or other agencies/providers. The EYFS Leader will try to attend all Tri-borough EYFS Leader Network Meetings and as a School, we will aim for up to two members of staff to attend the annual EYFS Conference organised by the Tri-borough.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of all EYFS staff to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and EYFS coordinator will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.