



St Edward's Church of England  
Primary School

# **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

**October 2014**



# St. Edward's Church of England Primary School

## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

### 1.0 AIMS OF ST EDWARD'S SCHOOL

The school aims to achieve a happy fulfilled community within which:

- lively faith and Christian values permeate all that is done;
- the unique qualities of each individual are appreciated and nourished so that potential is fully realised;
- excellence is energetically pursued in all aspects of school life;
- and from which young people are able to live rich, satisfying lives with the desire to witness and contribute to society.

### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to achieve their full potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services, they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage but is vitally important in itself. For young children, there is no distinction between work and play. Learning for young children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the foundation stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

### 3.0 AIMS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, to enable them to develop their full potential.

We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- recognising that all children are unique and special;
- understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally;
- providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued;
- fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community;
- teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways;
- encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes;
- developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously;
- supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions different from their own;
- understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development;
- providing learning experiences in play which reflect children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn;
- providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development;
- providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, both inside and out of doors.

#### **4.0 THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE FRAMEWORK**

- 4.1 Teaching in the EYFS is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (September 2014). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through

four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments' and 'Children Learn in Different Ways and at Different Rates'.

4.2 The curriculum is centred on three prime areas of learning:

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

Providers must also support activities through four specific areas which strengthen the prime areas. These are:

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

These Areas of Learning and Development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are all closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum which allows children to make extensive links between what they are learning. All Areas of Learning and Development are given equal weighting and value.

4.3 Planned and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn. We support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These 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.

(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2012)

## 5.0 ACTIVE LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

5.1 We organise the day to provide a balance between the following:

- Child Initiated Activities – children make choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her outcome for learning;

- Adult Initiated Activities - practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning.
- Adult Directed Activities – children engage in planned activities to meet specific learning outcomes.

5.2 At St Edward's CE Primary School we recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play.

We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to support the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

In providing these active learning opportunities through play, we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework. This is essentially a play based curriculum and pedagogy as the provision of play opportunities underpins its delivery.

## **6.0 ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING**

6.1 The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated learning. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. All practitioners are involved in observing children.

Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests, play schemes and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

6.2 Learning Journeys record children's progress over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with photographic evidence and observations.

There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development using the new Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (2012). At the end of the year it provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements. Baseline assessment is carried out using the EYFS Profile during the children's first four weeks upon entering the setting. Judgments made on children's development in the Profile are based on practitioners' evidence of children's behaviour observed independently and consistently in their self-initiated activities across all Areas of Learning and Development.

## **7.0 PLANNING**

The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year.

Medium term planning is created and takes into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs.

All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child initiated activities indoors. The setting also makes full use of the outdoor environment.

## **8.0 PARENTS AS PARTNERS**

8.1 At St Edward's CE Primary School we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. So, practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents.

8.2 We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. We encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

8.3 Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through regular letters, learning maps, reading records and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. This also gives suggestions of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting. Whole school newsletters are also sent home on a termly basis.

8.4 Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings during the course of the academic year. The first of these takes place during the Autumn term to allow practitioners and

parents to discuss how children have settled into the setting. A second parent's evening takes place during the Spring term where practitioners will feed back on children's learning and development progress.

Other opportunities for practitioners to share children's learning, development and well-being with parents include stay and play sessions every half term where demonstration lessons take place and learning journeys are available to view. Parents receive an end of year report where children's achievements are recognised.

- 8.5 Parents are also invited to get involved with school life. There are opportunities for them to help with activities such as swimming, educational visits and reading, as well as offering their particular skills, (e.g. cooking, art, music) to support children's learning.
- 8.6 St Edward's CE Primary school has a friendly, open-doors ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have.

**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

**Approved by Teaching and Learning Committee:**

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Chair of Teaching and Learning Committee

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Date

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Head Teacher

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Date

**Approved by Full Governing Body:**

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Chair of Governors

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Date

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Head Teacher

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Date