

St.Peter's C.E. Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Updated: September 2022

To be reviewed: October 2023

1John 3:18 Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth

Hope, Honesty, Compassion



St. Peter's C.E. Primary School **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

Context

St. Peter's is a one form entry primary school that offers part-time, and some full-time, nursery places to children in our community. At St. Peter's, there are higher than average proportions of deprivation, children who speak English as an additional language and children with Special Educational Needs.

We are fortunate to have provision for 2-year-olds (Pre-nursery) as part of our early years setting and run as two separate classes: Nursery (including Pre-nursery) and our Reception class.

Our Vision for Early Years

At St. Peter's Primary School, we aim to provide every child with the skills to become happy, independent and curious life-long learners. Through a safe, positive, caring environment, we provide the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential and feel a valued member of our school. We embrace Christian values and ensure all children begin to lay the foundations for learning that they can build on as they continue through their school life at St. Peter's.

Key Requirements of Early Years

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up." "Early Years Foundation Stage Profile" Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is for children from birth to five years of age. Planning will consider the emotional, social, physical, creative and intellectual development of the children and will be based upon what the children can do.

Learning will be active and involve first hand experiences using cross-curricular topics – holistic learning - set in meaningful contexts. It will value the children's own interests. Children are involved in making choices and decision. Self-discipline and respect for self and others are strongly encouraged. There will be a balance of child initiated and adult initiated activities with focused teaching and independent learning.

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Purposeful play situations are planned and are valuable for observing, supporting and extending the children's learning. Open ended questioning is used to encourage investigation and problem solving.

The Governor with responsibility for Early Years will be involved through visits and discussions in the decisions concerning practice and policies.

The EYFS expects practitioners to:

- Recognise children as competent and influential individuals who need to be involved in their own assessment
- Work with parents and other adults who are important to the child.
- Recognise each child's individual route to learning.
- Build a broad picture of the child which ranges widely, incorporating and interconnecting all the areas of Learning and Development

The EYFS states that practitioners must:

- Undertake systematic observations and assessments in order to plan to meet young children's individual needs
- Stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning (*EYFS Statutory Framework 2021*)

Our EYFS Structure

At St Peter's CE Primary School we have:

- Two Nursery sessions per day for our part time children as well as all day sessions for our all day children. We have one Class Teacher, one TA3 and two TA2s who provide 1:1 support for children with SEN.
- One Reception class with one Class Teacher, two Teaching Assistants (one providing 1:1 support for a child with an EHCP.)
- All classes have continual access to the outdoor learning environment.
- The Nursery teacher is the EYFS Leader.
- The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A Unique Child

Positive Relationships

Enabling Environments

Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At St Peter's, 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 and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebrations of work and achievements, and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

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Inclusion

At St Peter's, we value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at St Peter's CE Primary School are treated fairly and all children and their families are valued. In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of the children. In planning we ensure that we meet the needs of all the learners using practitioner's knowledge and both formative and summative assessment procedures.

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 and interests.
- 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.

It is important to us that all children in our school feel 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but are also taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

Safeguarding and Welfare

At St Peter's, we comply with the welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. 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 is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.

Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

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Our school has rigorous Safeguarding and Welfare policy and procedures that are used to identify anyone at risk or harm of radicalisation that sets out clear procedures for reporting any concerns.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to teach children that, in society as in a classroom, there is a need for boundaries, rules and limits which we all need to adhere to help us to stay safe. We aim to teach children to be consciously aware of their feelings and the feelings of others and how to manage their own behaviour by identifying behavioural issues and using them as a teaching moment. We also aim to teach our children to take risks whilst learning how to recognise and avoid hazards. Children with specific dietary needs are catered for by providing an agreed individual menu with parents.

Positive Relationships

All staff involved in the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen. At our school both the teachers and support staff act as a Key Person to an assigned group of children.

At St Peter's, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played in their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school, through inviting the parents into school prior to the children starting.
- Parents signing the home school agreement prior to their children starting school;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress.
- Inviting parents/carers into school to for parent-teacher meetings and Stay, Play and Learn sessions;
- Encouraging parents to talk to the EYFS staff and school staff generally if there are any concerns. We discuss our open door policy with the parents during home visits and regularly remind parents when adults are available to talk to;
- Parents attending 'Parent's Evening' termly.
- Parents receiving a report on their child's progress at the end of each year in EYFS.
- Sending out questionnaires encouraging the parents to feedback on experiences and how we as a school can support them further, improving home school relationships;
- Offering workshops to the parents throughout the year to demonstrate how they can support their child's learning at home;
- Using our School Values certificates to share achievements with parents;
- Arranging activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Christmas performance, Sports Day etc.;
- Communicating with parents through the school website, newsletters and 'Seesaw';
- Weekly Bulletin's sent to parents to share the week's learning so they can talk to the children about what they have done at nursery and school.
- We also provide parents with a half termly curriculum overview newsletter informing them of the learning that will be taking place for that half term to maximise their support at home.

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Enabling Environments

At St Peter's, 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, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, explore and investigate, be creative and imaginative or be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Outdoor Learning

Both Nursery and Reception have their own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers children the freedom to explore, use their senses and be physically active. It also offers opportunities to do things in different ways and on different scales compared to indoors. It offers the children space to explore, use 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 seven areas of learning. The outdoor areas have various 'resource pods', each with a range of resources and learning opportunities. Outdoors is both a teaching and learning environment, where there is a balance of child-led and adult-led learning. The outdoor area is comprehensively risk assessed and checks are completed by staff.

Learning through Play

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. It is our belief that children learn best from activities and experiences that they have initiated and play with peers is important for children's development. We carefully plan the environment both inside and outside and provide opportunities within these environments to reflect these interests to inspire them further, whilst also making sure that children have the opportunity to develop a number of skills such as language, their emotions and creativity, social and intellectual skills and to extend and practise the skills they have learned through direct teaching. Through play, children:

- explore and develop learning experiences, helping them make sense of the world.
- practise and build up ideas;
- learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules;
- have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own at their own level and pace;
- communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems;
- express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Giving children the opportunity to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, allows them to discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. With adult support this process enhances children's ability to think critically and ask questions. Adults can support them in making connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning. The children can also choose whether to work inside or outside during their independent learning time.

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Learning and Development

Our Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021. The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are important and included in the curriculum taught. There are three prime areas, which are seen to underpin all of the basics and support the other more specific areas of the curriculum. All seven areas of learning and development are important and are inter-connected.

The Prime Areas:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)
- Physical Development

The Specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- 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 led and child initiated activities. The practitioners within the setting are aware and fully trained on how to deliver the Early Years curriculum thinking of the seven areas of learning and also the ***characteristics of effective learning***.

The characteristics of effective learning are;

- Playing and Exploring (engagement)
- Active Learning (motivation)
- Creating and Thinking Critically (thinking)

These characteristics are embedded into the curriculum and everyday practise and support the children's learning across all areas.

Playing and Exploring

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and Thinking Critically

Children are given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the environment to extend their learning.

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Planning

Through planning, teachers ensure that there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. During child initiated activities the adults' role is to show an interest in the children's ideas, build conversation, facilitate and share ideas and model different skills. Such interaction with the children is essential as this helps to build the children's understanding and therefore guides new learning. Literacy is planned around quality texts linked to a topic theme. The topic themes link to history, geography and/or science topics that children will be covering in Key Stage 1. The EYFS topics are covered on a two-year cycle. The topics provide many opportunities for children to develop the early skills in 'Understanding the World' that will then be built upon in Key Stage 1. For example, in Reception, the 'Space' topic provides children with early skills that are then built upon in Year 1 within the 'Voyagers' topic. (Neil Armstrong).

At the start of each topic, we plan 'hooks' to provide an exciting start to the sequence of lessons.

Much of the learning will also come from 'in the moment' observations. We also follow children's interests and make careful observations of the children in their play, making decisions about how the activity can be built upon to move learning on at that moment.

Direct Teaching

At specific times in the day the children will take part in an activity that is teacher/practitioner led.

In Nursery these sessions include:

- Daily Dough Disco/Squiggle While you Wiggle
- Daily stories/rhymes
- Small group Language and Communication activities
- Phonics/Mathematics sessions.

In Reception these sessions include:

- Daily reading
- Daily Writing sessions/lessons
- Daily mathematics sessions/lessons
- Topic/investigation session
- Daily Phonics teaching

All taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each class using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and, in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child.

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Assessment, Recording and Reporting of Progress

Assessment is an essential and important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. Assessment takes a variety of forms in order to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. These can be through observations, photographic and video evidence, examples of work and parental conversations/observations.

Assessment occurs throughout any taught session as well as during continuous provision when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. Teaching staff will plan for learning experiences based on what they have observed and what they know about the child's level of achievement and interests. Careful observations allow staff to identify gaps or strengths in learning and plan accordingly.

'Seesaw'

At St Peter's we use the 'Seesaw' app as a tool to record children's learning through their play. Observations, photos and videos of children's learning are taken and uploaded onto 'Seesaw'. These observations and 'wow' moments are shared with parents. Parents can also share their own observations of their child from home. Photos are also shared with parents on the school's Facebook page.

Two Year Checks

We review the children's progress when a child is between 2 and 3 years old. We provide parents/carers with a written summary of their child's development in the Prime Areas. If there are any significant concerns, a targeted support plan is put in place which may also involve other professionals if appropriate.

Baseline Assessment

On entry to Nursery and Reception a baseline assessment is carried out for each child through teacher observations.

The ***Reception Baseline Assessment*** (RBA) takes place within the first 6 weeks of starting in Reception.

WellComm Assessment

On entry to Nursery the children are assessed using the WellComm Speech and Language assessment tool. This allows us to see where the children are in terms of their language development and plan small group/individual interventions as appropriate.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

The EYFSP profile is completed in the final term of Reception. It provides parents/carers and teachers a picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities and their readiness for Year 1. Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. Children are assessed to be either working at an 'expected' level of development or 'emerging'.

Parent evenings are held in the Autumn and Spring terms to provide information about children's progress to discuss the children's learning journey and to talk about children's strengths, achievements, interests and next steps. These form the basis for the monitoring of pupil progress as the children progress through school.

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Phonics

At St Peter's we teach phonics using '*Supersonic Phonic Friends*'. In Reception, children are grouped in abilities and SEN children attend Phase 1 sessions in the Nursery which focuses the 'aspects' of early phonics.

Nursery children access Phase 1 as part of their Phonics sessions and our Pre-nursery have '*Language Through Listening*' and '*WellComm*' sessions which focuses primarily on language development and confidence to talk in a small group as well as developing listening and attention skills.

Our home reading books for Reception are phonetically decodable and, where possible, link in with the new sounds being taught.

Transition to Nursery

Parents of children who are offered a place in the Nursery will be invited to a short induction meeting in June at which they will be given information about their child's class, staff, uniform, general routines and curriculum. 'Seesaw' is introduced at the meeting.

Dummies and toilet training are discussed and parents can ask for support in any areas.

Contact is made with any previous settings for any children and baseline information is gathered. Children are offered a 'stay and play' session at school, where they can attend with their parents. This is an ideal opportunity for the teacher and teaching assistants to meet the children and parents and discuss any concerns. We hold 'Stay and Play' sessions throughout the year for families that will be joining St. Peter's at each intake.

Nursery/Pre-School to Reception

Nursery and Reception teachers work closely together throughout the year and take part in joint moderations. This ensures Reception teachers develop a good understanding of Nursery children's abilities and needs before they move up.

Parents will be invited to a short induction meeting in June at which they will be given information about their child's class, staff, uniform, general routines and curriculum. 'Seesaw' is introduced at the meeting.

In the final summer term, during transition week, the Reception children spend the morning with their new Reception teacher.

Reception to Year 1

Throughout the year, Reception children make use of the whole school facilities such as the hall, ICT suite and KS1 playground to ensure the children are confident and well prepared for moving around the main school building. Playing out with the KS1 children at playtime also prepares them for mixing with older children. Reception attends weekly celebration assemblies and other themed assemblies throughout the year. In the final summer term, during transition week, the Reception children spend the morning with their new Year 1 teacher.

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Reception teachers also moderate with Year 1 teachers in the summer term which helps inform the teachers of the children's abilities and needs before they move up.

At the end of each school year, teachers meet to share information on each child with their new class teacher including their knowledge, understanding, achievements and end of year assessment data. This ensures all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to the new school year.

Teachers are also provided with copies of end of year reports for the children in their new class.

Intimate Care

'Intimate Care' is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's stage of development, they may need some support, for example, dressing, encouragement to wipe their bottom after toileting and changing underwear following an accident. Some children are in nappies and need to be changed regularly. In most cases intimate care is to do with personal hygiene. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. It is our aim that all children should be independent and we consider our role to be one of supporting and encouraging rather than doing.

Equal Opportunities

Staff ensure that all children have equal access to the curriculum. They will be encouraged to respect similarities and differences within cultures other than their own. The school seeks to develop tolerance and concern for others.

Monitoring

The Early Years Leader, Deputy Headteacher and Headteacher are responsible for the monitoring of this policy. Areas for development will be incorporated into the School Improvement Plan as necessary.

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