



EARLY YEARS & FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Ratified by Headteacher	16 th May 2019
Next Review	Summer 2021

The Vision of St John's CE Primary School, Rishworth

Matthew 5:16 (NRSV)

"Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your father in heaven."

Following Matthew 5:16, people shine through success, honesty, independence, neighbourliness and enjoyment. We believe children learn best when they're happy and have the confidence to respond to challenges, within a caring Christian environment where adults lead by example. We value the partnership with parents, families and the community to always be the best we can be.

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework establishes that "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." (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, April 2017)

Principles

There are four guiding principles that shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- every child 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 and parents and/or carers
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Early Years learning is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. The EYFS plays an important part in setting the scene for future learning and development. The pupils at St John's CE Primary School start with us from a range of pre-school settings with a wide variety of learning experiences. At St John's we build upon that prior learning experience to prepare the pupils for a school setting. This is done through an holistic approach to learning that ensures that parents and carers, school staff and pre-school settings work effectively together to support the continued learning and development of all pupils.

EYFS CURRICULUM INTENT

SELF – At this school we want our pupils to understand more about themselves during their year in EYFS. We want them to challenge themselves and develop resilience and perseverance when meeting challenges. We want them to develop a strong foundation for their future in school and life.

OTHERS – We broaden pupils understanding of others in our community by introducing them to different people from their community and exposing them to a wider understanding of the world through engaging topics.

WIDER WORLD – EYFS pupils at St John's are taught about the wider world around them to foster a sense of curiosity about the world, they are nurtured in their use of technology and develop a better understanding of the environment in our outdoor classroom setting.

The School's Aims are:

- ◆ To maximise the academic attainment of each child
- ◆ To maximise the personal, social, spiritual and physical development of each child

The pupils, staff, parents and governors of St John's have worked together to create **our core values:**

Success. We aim to provide excellent learning opportunities to ensure the best possible progress and attainment for all children whatever their needs and abilities.

Honesty. We aim to develop children's understanding of the importance of honesty in all relationships and as part of self-reflection in a Christian environment.

Independence. We aim to develop the self-confidence in all our children that enables them to think and work independently, so striving for excellence in all areas of the curriculum.

Neighbourliness. We aim to ensure that every child becomes a compassionate and respectful member of the school, local, national and global communities.

Enjoyment. We aim to be a safe, friendly and welcoming environment where children have exciting and creative learning experiences that help develop an enjoyment and love of learning.

The areas of learning and development in EYFS

There are seven areas of learning and development in the EYFS. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These prime areas, are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

In addition to these are the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

In addition to the seven areas of learning and development, at St John's we must also recognise the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

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
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Teaching and learning style

In order for the pupils in EYFS to make sustained progress and achieve well against the Early Learning Goals when assessed in the Summer Term we have identified that the following support the learning of all pupils:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children 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 affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, challenge learning, develop skills that are required, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- daily Phonics, English and Mathematics lessons that are taught directly by teaching staff in Class One;
- 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;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- the development of older buddies in school to support transition of pupils into Reception.
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- the regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

Play in the Foundation Stage

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice 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 develop resilience through a range of challenges created to develop their skills and needs.

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

Safeguarding and Welfare

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns, which the school has, will be noted and, if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant agency. The safety of the child is of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available in school and online for parents to read.

The welfare of pupils is key to the happiness and wellbeing of the children in our care. In addition to the class teacher having overall responsibility for the pupils, each child has a nominated key worker and parents are informed of who this will be at the Induction Meeting in the Summer Term before their child begins school. To further support the sense of wellbeing and develop relationships for new pupils, each child is nominated a trained Year 6 Buddy who helps and supports them during their first year at school.

Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

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 (see our SEN & Inclusion Policy).

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by Summer Term of their Reception Year. Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, 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:

- 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. This involves speech therapy for some of our children.

Assessment and progress

We use formative and summative assessments against the areas of learning and development from the moment the pupils enter school. Baseline assessments are formed from transition data from pre-school settings, observations of the pupils during pre-school/transition day visits and summative baseline assessments for reading, writing and mathematics. Each half term progress data is collected and recorded in the school's tracking system. This is used as a basis for reporting to parents each term on their child's progress and next steps.

In the summer term, the development of all reception pupils is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. We record whether pupils are meeting expected levels of development, if they are exceeding expected levels or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile. There is a statutory duty to report this to DfE. We then also report the results of the Profile with parents and/or carers, and offer an opportunity to discuss these as part of a parents evening in July. Year 1 teachers also meet to discuss each pupil's skills and abilities in both the areas of learning and the characteristics of effective learning.

The role of parents

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- the teacher visits children in their pre-school setting;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- arranging for children to start school over the first two weeks of term;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's red book. We invite parents to curriculum evenings to discuss the kind of work that the children undertake in the reception class.