

Early Years Policy September 2018

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EYFS Policy

School Mission Statement

Opening minds, learning through challenge and celebrating God's world.

Introduction

Skerton St Luke's C of E VA Primary school is committed to providing a safe, secure, and stimulating environment in which our Reception aged children can prosper.

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and 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

Department for Education, April 2017.

Philosophy

We believe that early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just preparation for the next stage – it is vitally important.

Early Years, within this policy refers to children in the Foundation Stage class (Reception year). The school can admit up to 30 children each year.

Requirements

Children are required by law to attend full time school from the term after their fifth birthday. We have one admission point during the year which is in September.

The EYFS Framework

Our Foundation Stage learning is based on the principles that:

- Every child is unique and is consistently learning;

- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments

Children develop and learn in different ways and these are acknowledged when planning for development. The learning experiences in the Foundation Stage underpin all future learning and are based on ongoing observations and assessments in the three **Prime Areas** of learning;

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)
2. Communication and Language (CL)
3. Physical Development (PD)

And four **Specific Areas**;

4. Literacy (L)
5. Mathematics (M)
6. Understanding the World (UtW)
7. Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

Teaching and Learning

Staff have a clear understanding of how children learn, have high expectations of children, based on a secure knowledge of their abilities, and work as a team to ensure activities are purposeful and based on their learning requirements. Staff work directly with the children and their play is supported and extended sensitively.

Space and resources are well used to provide an enabling environment for successful learning and staff are flexible, exploring learning opportunities as they occur.

The class teacher ensures that there is a balance of adult led and child-initiated learning.

An enabling environment has been created in which children can successfully develop the Characteristics of Effective Learning through providing;

- A happy and welcoming space in which all children are treated as individuals and feel secure and valued;
- An exciting and stimulating environment in which children will be motivated with a desire to learn;
- Opportunities for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and skills, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities, enabling them to develop into confident and independent learners;
- Encouragement for children to play an active role in their learning; to question, discuss and listen to other points of view, in the knowledge that their opinions are valued;
- A commitment to outdoor learning, giving children the opportunity to learn through active play and exploration;
- Encouragement for children to develop creative thinking, curiosity and successful acquisition of skills;
- A personalised approach to learning, based on their individual stages of development, ensuring all children are supported at a level and pace that enables them to realise their potential;

- Inclusion for all children and access to the whole curriculum;
- A variety of teaching styles, appropriate to the needs of the children and the skills being taught;
- Involvement in practical activity, enquiry and purposeful play, building on what children already know;
- Strong partnerships between parents/carers and teachers, encouraging a shared approach, which involves home and school working together;
- Good relationships between our school and feeder settings, such as nurseries and playgroups.

Outdoor play and exploration

At Skerton St Luke's we value the importance of the outdoor learning environment and recognise that the outdoors is often where children want to be. We therefore ensure that the outdoor learning environment is an integral part of the daily curriculum. During Continuous Provision, the children are free to flow between inside and outdoors.

The outdoor environment gives children unique opportunities to play co-operatively, share resources, turn take, negotiate, communicate ideas and develop friendships.

Children gain confidence in what they can do as well as feeling the benefits of being healthy and active. Physical activity is enjoyable and promotes a sense of self-esteem through achievements. Growth and development of the body and brain are inseparable. We believe movement is a vital component of play and other ways of learning and requires space.

Some types of learning can only take place outside.

Children need freedom to be safely adventurous and take controlled risks. Many of our children have limited outdoor space at home and some have no access to a garden so the opportunity to play outside at school is vital.

Children who need to be outside have the right to access a full curriculum and the whole curriculum can be discovered in a well-planned and resourced outdoor area.

Planning

Staff plan a broad and balanced curriculum of learning experiences based on the children's interests, needs and wants. The document Development Matters is used to support planning along with the supplementary material A Framework to Support Curriculum Planning in EYFS, 2017.

Planning ensures children are engaged in meaningful and challenging activities, both child initiated and adult directed, inside and outdoors, which support their journey towards achieving the end of year expectation, the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). There is a collaborative approach to planning. Staff are flexible to the needs of the children and make the most of opportunities for learning as they arise. Activities and planning become more structured as and when children are ready but especially as the year progresses in readiness for Year 1.

SEND

Ongoing observation and assessment of the children informs future planning and next steps to individualise learning.

Where children do not respond to differentiation and do not make adequate progress, there is a need for the school to do something additional or different. Staff discuss concerns with parents and with the SEND Lead. If a child requires a need and support in addition to what is already on offer, an IEP will be written to highlight the child's specific need. A meeting will take place with the parents to discuss the child's targets and next steps. Parents are asked to sign the IEP (see SEND policy).

Children may be referred to a Speech and Language Drop In clinic if staff have concerns regarding a child's speech and language. These concerns are discussed with the parents before suggesting the parent seek advice.

Targets regarding SALT are built into daily practice in Early Years led by the child's Key Worker and class teacher.

The teacher can make a written referral to the clinic if parents are disengaged and the child is not making the expected progress due to Speech and Language.

Assessment

Regular assessment of children's learning is carried out to ensure that future planning reflects identified individual needs. Assessment is through observation and discussion carried out by all staff in Early Years, though formal assessment of Phonics, reading and mathematical skills take place regularly. Records will be kept on each child's development and achievement in the form of observations, annotated examples of work, photographs and dated comments. Each child has a Learning Journey. Staff contribute to all Learning Journeys. The Key Worker has sole responsibility for ensuring a child's evidence is in chronological order and maintaining the record. The class teacher uses the Learning Journeys to identify gaps in learning, knowledge, skills and understanding and plans accordingly and has the overview of assessment for every child.

Equal Opportunities

Staff ensure that all children have equality of opportunity. Children are encouraged to enjoy contributions and experiences from different cultures and religions as well as their own and to respect similarities and differences.

Safeguarding

Staff lock all gates to ensure the children are safe in Early Years and its surrounding areas. The path, hall and Early Years gates are locked between the hours of 9am and 3pm to ensure there is no public access on school grounds.

At the start of the day parents hand children over to staff where children enter the Early Years classroom safely. At the end of the day children are dismissed directly to a parent/carer whose name is on the collection list completed on the child's entry to school. It is the parent's responsibility to inform staff of any amendments to the Collection list during the year.

Staff will approach unknown adults and the parent is contacted if a person attempts to collect a child whose name is not on the list.

Partnership with Parents

At Skerton St Luke's we value 'Partnership with Parents'. We recognise that parents and carers are the child's first educators and have a vital role to play in their child's education. Staff aim to establish strong links with parents and families through;

- An induction evening in the summer term once a place at our school has been allocated held by the class teacher and supported by support staff acting as Key Workers;
- Lots of opportunities for information sharing prior to the child starting school including;
 - Induction visits during the summer term prior to their child starting school, during which parents and children are invited to spend time in school together;
 - A coffee morning for all new starters and parents to meet other children and families before starting school in September;
 - An open invitation to attend our Summer Term Family Fun Night;
 - Home visits in September prior to the child starting school;
 - Visit to their child's nursery/preschool prior to the child starting school;
 - A phased start in September, working with parents to ensure a happy, smooth transition for all involved, both children and parents;
- Open session after school every Wednesday until 4pm to speak with staff, view Learning Journeys, tour the classroom, etc.
- ½ termly class Newsletters and Curriculum Maps to inform parents of relevant news, topics and learning in Reception;
- Termly teacher/parent meetings;
- Opportunities to speak with staff daily before and after school;
- ½ termly Stay and Play sessions;
- Termly written report including ideas for how parents can help their child at home;
- Encouraging parents to fill in and send 'WOW' slips to celebrate home/out of school achievements with the child's classmates;
- Parent Phonics workshop during the Autumn term;
- Math's workshops weekly during Autumn 2 to support Mathematics learning in class with their child.

The school keeps parents fully involved and informed about their child's education; this is achieved through our Home/School Communication diary, the school website, texts, letters, Newsletters and through verbal communication daily.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Early Years lead will be responsible for the day to day monitoring of the policy outcomes and will use this information to inform future action plans. Areas identified for development will be incorporated in to the school's development plan. The head teacher and the Governors will ensure that the monitoring and evaluation are carried out.

Conclusion

This Policy has considered the implications of EYFS and should be read in conjunction with other School Policies and procedures, including the Equal Opportunities Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Medication Policy, SEND Policy, Behaviour Management Policy and Safeguarding Policy.