



St Nicholas Church of England (Controlled) Primary School

“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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.(Statutory Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2014)

This policy is written in line with the Statutory Guidance for the EYFS 2014

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year.
Children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

- ☐ A Unique Child
- ☐ Positive Relationships
- ☐ Enabling Environments
- ☐ Learning and Development

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes.

A Unique Child

At St Nicholas C of E (Controlled) Primary School 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 and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at St Nicholas C of E (Controlled) Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. 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 Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning as a foundation stage team to meet the needs of all learners.

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Welfare

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. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

"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." (EYFS 2014)

At St Nicholas C of E (Controlled) Primary School we:

- promote the welfare of children.
- 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.

Positive Relationships

At St Nicholas C of E (Controlled) Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Offering Play and Talk sessions to all children due to start school in the term before they start.
- Providing an induction meeting for parents to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents may have.
- Providing welcome packs, with a reading book for pupils to support positive learning links
- Providing workshops for parents based on phonics and maths
- Enabling parents to have a home visit at the beginning of their child's first term at school.
- Operating an open door policy for parents with any queries.
- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents and valuing the ongoing contributions to this from parents.
- Sharing learning with parents each week via the Reception weekly newsletter
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation evenings per year.
- Sending home a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception.

All staff involved within the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

We have good links with the local nurseries which enables us to foster links with children attending pre-school establishments prior to them starting at our school. The Foundation Stage staff meets with nursery providers to discuss each individual child and their transition process into school.

Enabling Environments

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At St Nicholas C of E (Controlled) Primary 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, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Our staff are skilled in observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. The weekly planning is based upon a topic but also takes into consideration children's interests and their next steps in learning. This fostering of a child's interest develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning.

The Planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. At the end of their foundation year in school the children's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage area is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom area. The free flow between the inside and the outside has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in the early years.

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.

The three Prime areas are:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

In planning and guiding children's activities, in line with the EYFS statutory guidance (2014) we reflect on the different ways that children learn and ensure these form part of all learning opportunities. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

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- 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.

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