



Early Year Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy 2021-2022 St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary School

Early years foundation stage refers to children who are in our nursery or reception classes it is often referred to as EYFS.



Intent

At St. Michael in the Hamlet (SMITH) we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children, giving them a strong foundation for future learning.

In our early years setting, we have encompassed the school values and have created a Safe, Motivational, Inclusive Team where children are Happy and in a nurturing environment making learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside families to support and meet their needs, so that every child has the best future life chances. We adhere to the statutory framework of the EYFS and the guiding principles that shape practice within early years' settings.

At St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary School we offer a curriculum rich in wonder and memorable experiences. We work hard to provide a stimulating environment that provides exciting opportunities, promotes challenge, exploration, adventure and a real love of learning. It's our aim that all children develop physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally in an environment which values all cultures, communities and people. We aim for our children to be confident and independent, to believe in themselves and interact positively with others. We understand that play is an integral part of learning and this is at the heart of our early years curriculum. We believe that the correct mix of adult directed and uninterrupted child-initiated play ensures the best outcomes for pupils. Warm and positive relationships between staff and children, consistent routines and strong relationships with parents are key. We recognise the crucial role that early year's education has to play in providing firm foundations upon which the rest of a child's education is successfully based.

Implementation of our S.M.I.T.H EYFS curriculum

At St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary School we meet the welfare requirements laid down in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and actively safeguard and promote the welfare of all of our children.

We prioritise creating a 'language rich' environment through the use of songs, nursery rhymes, stories and providing time for quality interactions between adults and between peers. Trained staff ensure that interactions are positive and progressive, allowing children to flourish and gather words at pace in order to become confident communicators. Children are encouraged to become early readers through enjoyment of books and the systematic teaching of phonics. The children

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learn nursery rhymes and develop their mathematical thinking through direct teaching and exploration. We want our children to become confident mathematicians who can apply what they have learnt to real life experiences.

We have built our school environment to enable our children to strengthen their core muscles through physical play, children spend time outdoors in their natural environment in all weathers. They develop through wonderful, exploratory, sensory experiences in our mud kitchen, sandpit and taking part in our outdoor learning sessions. Our learning environment is adaptable in order to reflect children's interests and progression. The children are supported to learn to work together, manage their feelings and ask questions through skilled adult facilitated play.

The curriculum is taught through topics which are enriched with classroom enhancements, trips and visitors. Topics are supported by quality key texts. These are chosen carefully to encourage children's speech, language and communication development. All planning however, is flexible and responsive to children's needs so plans can be changed and adapted dependent on children's interests.

Medium term plans are topic based. They offer diverse experiences in all seven areas and reflect the learning experiences needed as an outcome of assessment and observation. We also follow the children's interests where appropriate. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, which is based on observations, children's interests and topical issues. Our curriculum is flexible and it allows us to meet the needs of each cohort. This means that topics do not stay the same each school year, but are developed to meet the needs of the current cohort. We supplement resources and opportunities for children to follow their interests in our child initiated sessions in the afternoon. These are an extra to our continuous provision, which is available to the children throughout the year.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS. We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to challenge children further. Staff complete electronic observations that inform our future planning. When delivering and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and we reflect these in our practice.

We value all our children as individuals. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of individual children, follows their interests and supports them at their own pace, so that they can make effective progress towards the early learning goals. Our personalised approach means that we can identify any additional needs early and support children and families.

Children have whole class and small group times daily, with carousels of activities. We have daily phonics sessions that are multisensory. Whole class sessions involve guided writing, phonics games, story-telling, maths inputs, circle times, nursery rhymes, show and tell etc carousel activities include reading, writing, maths, creative activities and development of fine motor skills. The nature of these activities develop and change as children move from nursery to reception and throughout the reception year.

We promote equality of opportunity and provide early intervention for those children who require it, through our personalised approach. We work in partnership with parents and we plan

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challenging learning experiences informed by high quality formative assessment observations alongside the children's interests. We provide opportunities for both adult-initiated and child-initiated learning. We provide a secure, stimulating and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.

We have a large and varied outdoor space for EYFS that include a playground and garden area; a secluded side garden and a wild garden. All classrooms in nursery and reception have access to our outdoor spaces. Our wild garden has a wooden cabin for outdoor lessons. Children are outdoors every-day for playtimes and at lunchtime in our EYFS outdoor area. Our outdoor learning improves physical skills; develops resilience and social skills; forges new relationships and develops children's vestibular systems. We are able to access maths on a larger scale outdoors and develop a wider vocabulary, as well as learning about the cyclical pattern of nature and the human responsibility to take care of our natural world.

We understand the importance of parental engagement and believe that our parents have a crucial role to play in their children's education. We work hard to create strong partnerships between home and school. We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways. We have an online communication tool, class dojo which is used throughout the school to alert parents to upcoming events. We send home reading books and home school activity books and diaries. We keep parents informed through half termly newsletters and topic webs and our school website.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

As part of the learning and teaching process, children are assessed in relation to their progress towards the Early Learning Goals. These judgements are made on the basis of accumulative observations and in depth knowledge of the children acquired through ongoing assessment. These ongoing assessments are recorded via Tapestry and are used to inform planning and next steps in teaching and learning for all children throughout the year.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

Transitions

At any transition, we acknowledge the children's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the children and other settings, including nurseries and childminders. Children attend introductory sessions to nursery and reception to develop familiarity with the setting and staff. Teachers visit the new reception intake in their nurseries before they start school. In the final term in reception, the year 1 and early years staff meet to discuss each child's development against the early learning goals in order to support a smooth transition to year 1. This discussion

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enables the year 1 teachers to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all pupils transitioning to year 1.

Impact

At its core assessment in our EYFS at S.M.I.T.H, is to reflect our curriculum intent. It is to inform planning, next steps and curriculum develop so the we can best enable our children to achieve.

Our curriculum and its delivery ensure that children, from their own starting points make good progress. During their time with us children make good progress towards the national expectation for a good level of development at the end of the year. Pupils also make good progress toward their age-related expectations both academically and socially, developing a sense of themselves before transitioning into Year One.

Children develop their characteristics of learning and are able to apply their knowledge to a range of situations making links and explaining their ideas and understanding. Children are confident to take risks and discuss their successes and failures with peers and adults drawing on their experiences to improve or adjust what they are doing. We believe our high standards are due to our carefully planned environment, enriched play-based curriculum, quality first teaching and via on going, high quality formative assessment.

Day to Day Formative Assessment

We use this type of assessment to inform teaching on an ongoing daily basis. This assessment is based upon the class teacher's professional knowledge of what the child knows. As an EYFS team we record observation like these using Tapestry or class floor books. These observations can be gathered during child-led learning time, or during routine interactions such as during an adult led sessions. When it comes to next steps the class teacher and the EYFS team will reflect upon the skills and understanding that the child(ren) demonstrate in the course of everyday learning to plan what to teach next. When a child's learning is embedded it will be seen consistently in a range of situations.

In Setting Summative Assessment

This assessment is used to understand a child's performance at the end of a period of teaching and are measured against the learning outcomes. These assessments are interconnected meaning that children are likely to demonstrate attainment in more than one area of learning during an observation. The purpose of these assessments are to inform the child's learning and modify the curriculum to their needs.

Statutory Summative Assessment

As we are under the local education authority we use nation statutory assessment to understand a child's performance in relation to nation expectations.

At the end of the summer term a written report sharing every child's progress in line with the early learning goals is shared with parents.

Policy written: August 2021

Reviewed: July 2022

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