



## Early Year Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy 2022- 2023 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

Our aim is to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children, giving them a strong foundation for future learning. We create a safe, happy and nurturing environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside families to meet their needs and support, 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.

### Guiding principles

As part of our practice we provide a balanced play based curriculum across the seven areas of learning. 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 challenging learning experiences informed by observation, the children's interests and assessment. We provide opportunities for both adult-initiated and child-initiated learning. We provide a secure, stimulating and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.

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

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development, across the seven areas of learning, to enable them to achieve and exceed the early learning goals, at the end of their reception year. All the seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. The three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. They are communication and language; physical development and personal, social and emotional development. As children move through the EYFS and become more secure in the prime areas, the four specific areas of literacy; maths; understanding the world and expressive arts and design are developed in line with children's individual needs.

### Planning

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences both indoors and outdoors, to encourage exploration, creativity and active learning. We aim

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to develop positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

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. 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. 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 written and 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.

### Outdoor learning

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 french windows that open onto 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. We have a three day/ two day split, whereby, Monday to Wednesday we are based indoors and Thursday and Friday are spent mainly outdoors. Our outdoor learning improves physical skills; develops resilience and social skills; forges new relationships and develops children's vestibular systems. We have a book spine for our outdoor learning. 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. Our side garden is developed to meet the needs of the specific areas of the curriculum, with a focus on literacy; maths; understanding the world and expressive arts and design. It includes reading, writing and maths areas; a music area; a mini allotment; a composter and a wormery.

### 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.

### Inclusion

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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.

### Wellbeing

We follow a daily routine that enables the children to feel safe and secure. Our children take part in a balance of adult led and independent activities. They can follow their interests in child initiated sessions in the afternoon and we support their personal interests, fascinations and schemas by developing their interests in our plans and resourcing our environment. We have an ocean theme throughout our setting. Our reception classes are called seals and penguins and our nursery class is called turtles. Our environment has an underlying sea theme, with a range of objects linked to the sea. All our display boards are backed in pale blue paper to create a unified and harmonious setting that is restful visually for pupils. We follow the basic principles of permaculture for children: people care; earth care and fair share. On a daily basis we teach children good manners and a sense of respect for others, nature and property. Every morning we do daily exercises to music to strengthen our bodies. We focus on gross motor movements that will enable children to have the fine motor skills they need for writing. A sense of community is further enhanced through regular eYfs assemblies and shows with parents. Our outdoor learning days at the end of the week allow pupils to benefit from nature when they become tired at the end of the school week.

### Parents as partners

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 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. We invite parents to stay and play sessions and to talks about phonics, reading and maths. 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.

### 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 & 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 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.

### Observation & assessment

as part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future planning. We record our observations using tapestry as well as using

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exercise books to record, English, phonics and maths work. All staff contribute, with discussions taking place daily and more in-depth meetings weekly. This enables all staff to help children to make good progress in all areas. There are parent's evenings in the autumn and spring term and staff are available to talk with parents on a daily basis at pick-up time. A written report is sent home in the summer term. It includes written comments on the characteristics of learning: playing and exploring; active learning and creating and thinking critically and each child's development in line with the early learning goals.

Policy reviewed: October 2022

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