



Together in God's love, we learn, inspire and grow



EYFS Policy

This policy has been adopted by the governing body
of
St Andrews' C of E Primary School.
It will be reviewed annually or as required.

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Signed: *P.Dwan* Deputy Head

'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' - DFE Early Years Statutory Framework 2021

With this in mind our Early Years policy and practice is aimed at giving children the best possible start to their school life and set them up for a successful and happy journey through school.

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St Andrew's Primary School children are admitted to Reception in the September following their fourth birthday. Children may also attend our school nursery from the term after they turn 3.

At St Andrew's Primary School we greatly value the importance that EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself, as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education. We are very proud of our Early Years Foundation Stage and achieving the Early Years Quality Mark in May 2015 and also in May 2021 showing that we maintain high standards at all times.

Links to St. Andrews' whole school curriculum intent:

Whole School Curriculum intent

Our UNIQUE curriculum is designed to recognise and have a solid **understanding** of children's prior learning, providing **knowledge** and **learning experiences** which build **resilience** and **critical thinking**.

Central to this is excellent skills in **Reading** - the essential key to the whole curriculum. We provide opportunities to engage learning in a fun and **nurturing** way and every child is recognised as a **unique individual**.

We plan and provide a clearly mapped out curriculum which results in good **quality** outcomes. We model and promote **positive attitudes** to learning which reflect the values of our Christian school, **enabling** children to take **responsibility** for their lives. Children leave St Andrew's with a sense of **belonging** to an **outward looking community** where opportunities and aspirations are **unlimited**.

At St Andrew's we ensure that **equality** is embedded in all that we do.

EYFS Intent

At St Andrew's, the EYFS curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior learning, provide first hand learning experiences, allow the children to develop interpersonal skills, build resilience and become creative, critical thinkers. Our curriculum is designed to provide children with opportunities to develop a wide range of skills that will be useful throughout their life and to become more independent in their learning.

We place strong emphasis on the religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our pupils. We intend for the children to become closer to God through specific teaching and also to develop their use of Christian values in their everyday life. Every child is recognised as a unique individual. We celebrate and welcome the differences within our school community.

The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values. We constantly provide enhancement opportunities to engage inquisitive minds and believe that in Early Years children should be a happy, inquisitive and have a desire to explore and always find out more.

Our curriculum is designed to develop the characteristics of effective learning:

- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
- **Active learning** - children keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
- **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

Links to our UNIQUE Curriculum:

A solid **understanding** of prior learning

- Transition meetings allow staff to gain an understanding of the children before they start school.
- Children's prior learning is taken into account when planning activities
- The children build on key knowledge through the year.
- There are high expectations for all learners.

Learning in a **nurturing** way

- We know that all children enter our school at different stages of their development. We support all children based on their needs.
- We support children and families in a caring way during this vital year in their lives.
- Children's seeds of learning are nurtured to grow through carefully planned experiences.

Every child recognised as a unique **individual**

- Children are given the chance to display individual creativity and personal talents.
- Outcomes for learning experiences are adapted to suit children's abilities and strengths.
- Opportunities for children are developed based on individual children's interests.
- Children are celebrated for their unique opinions, qualities, and talent.

Good **quality** outcomes

- We have high expectations of all children.
- Children make links between prior learning and new learning
- Quality first teaching is consistent in all lessons.

Unlimited aspirations

- Children are encouraged to explore their personal skills and talents.
- Children have the opportunity to take their own creative journey and lead their own learning.
- We will work with children to develop a love of learning based on their own interests.

Equality embedded in all that we do

- All children are given equal opportunities to learn and engage with learning opportunities.
- Children are all celebrate for what they achieve and the progress that they make from their own starting points.

Long term planning and curriculum design:

The Early Years curriculum is planned for and sequenced to develop children's skills throughout the year. There is also plenty of opportunities for children to follow their own interests with staff knowing how to direct this towards the learning that needs to take place.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

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

A Unique Child

At St Andrew's 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 and 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 and believe that every child matters. All children at St Andrew's Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

At the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage.

We do this 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 learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;

- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy).
- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

Positive Relationships

At St Andrew's 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/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our open afternoons and induction meetings.
- Arranging, where requested, visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Reception at St Andrew's Primary school.
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- Inviting parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time in Reception Class
- Providing an induction meeting for Nursery and Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Issuing weekly newsletters to all families to keep them informed about what has been happening during the week and also what we have to look forward to in the coming weeks.
- Family after school clubs such as Family IT club and yoga.
- Open door policy which enables families to speak to the staff before and after school each day.

- Regular twitter and website updates to share the children's learning journey with their family.
- Holding a 'Baseline Meeting' early in the Reception academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Sharing learning journeys and observations with families .
- Offering three parent/teacher consultation meetings per year (including the Baseline Meeting) at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers.

Staff

Nursery - 1 class teacher and key worker

Reception - 1 class teacher and 1 Key Worker

The EYFS Leader supports the teaching and learning in Nursery and Reception. All staff in the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Enabling Environments

At St Andrew's Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. 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. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

Learning and Developing

The EYFS Curriculum - Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

They require a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. 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

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Reception pupils also participate in a daily phonics sessions, following the Read, Write Inc Scheme.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- ***Playing and exploring*** - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. *'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest*

level. Play with peers is important for children's development.' Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, 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.

- **Active learning** - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.' Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.
- **Creating and thinking critically** - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Implementation in EYFS

The EYFS Curriculum engages all children and ensures that all children make good progress from their starting points. A number of key resources are used support the development of the curriculum including Development Matters and the Blackburn syllabus for RE.

Learning in the EYFS is focussed and driven by the desire for children to achieve their very best. Adult interactions are at a high level and we ensure that the observations taking place lead in to next steps planning. This ensures that the children's prior learning is always being built upon.

Where possible the children's own interests are used by the adults to engage the children in higher level thinking and deeper learning. Child initiated learning is valued and encouraged. Through adult led learning we introduce new concepts and knowledge, the

progression of which can be led by the children through enabling environments and continuous provision.

Each half termly topic is enhanced through a variety of first hand experiences (visits and visitors). These give all of the children a shared experience through which to explore and develop language, knowledge and skills. Constructed and deconstructed role play is also seen a valuable tool to support delivery of the curriculum and the development of key language skills.

Parents are valued as first educators and every effort is made to inform them of the EYFS curriculum whilst providing them with the tools to continue in school learning at home. Parents are also encouraged to inform school of their child's interests and achievements at home as these are an essential part of each child's learning journey. Strategies to include and inform parents include, 'Stay and Play' sessions, phonics workshops, family yoga, reading records, a Reception specific weekly newsletter and a variety of other family events throughout the year.

Teaching & Learning Styles

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, carers and other settings that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, 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;
- 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 space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;

- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage.

Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Starting Reception - Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to a 'New Intake Meeting' in the Summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to

- To highlight various school policies
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Purchase uniform and book bag if requested
- Explain the arrangements for the gradual induction in to Reception

New class sessions - The children are given opportunities to come in to school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. They will spend a time in their new class. Parents can leave their child during this session.

This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them.

Arrangements are also made for the children's new class teacher to visit them in their current nursery setting where possible.

When children join the school in September, they will be phased in over 2-3 days, but will attend school full time from their first day. Although some schools offer mornings only during September, we welcome children to do full days to assist working parents.

Although it is not a legal requirement for children to be in school until their fifth birthday, foundation staff and the majority of parents/guardians agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child starting school in Key Stage 1 (Year 1) - Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school assemblies as well as sharing playtimes with the Key Stage 1 children.

Children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend time in their new class during the summer term.

If a parent does not agree with their child starting school until they are five years old, a meeting will be arranged to discuss matters further.

Safeguarding & Welfare

At St Andrew's Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Keeping Safe - 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. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

Good Health - All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care - "Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident.

In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene and it is good practise for the school to inform the school nurse of all children requiring intimate care.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

How we ensure that pupils 'know more, remember more and can do more':

Children are taught a lot of new skills and knowledge in Nursery and Reception and our staff carefully monitor what they are showing an understanding of what and what they need support with. Through daily conversations, observations and talks with parents we know that our children know more each day, can show they remember this through their conversations and output and show this in their day to day interactions.

How the EYFS curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and SEND pupils:

All children in Early Years have access to a curriculum that is designed to help them progress from their individual starting points. Using the development matters and with guidance from other documents such as Birth to Five, children's next steps are carefully planned and sequenced to ensure progress for all.

We have a strong talk strategy to ensure that children from disadvantaged backgrounds can develop the language and understanding that they need to be successful in life. This includes the use of Talk Through Stories, Helicopter Stories and Speech and Language programmes.

EYFS Impact

Overview of EYFS assessment procedures

Observations - Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's portfolio on Tapestry.

Assessment - During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using the statutory baseline assessment and observations. At St Andrew's School we use information from home, nurseries and observations in the classroom, to determine each child's starting points across the 17 areas of learning. We continue to

assess the children throughout their time in Reception, enabling us to plan for each child ensuring that gaps are identified and all children make good progress.

We record each child's level of development against the 17 early Learning goals as Emerging or Expected. 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. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement. The teachers and key workers keep progress records and learning journeys through the use of Tapestry. This contains a wide range of evidence that we share with parents on a regular basis. An tracking system is completed at the end of each half term. This provides a summary for each child which feeds into the whole-school assessment and tracking process. We record each child's level of development to be just working towards, comfortably working within or securely working within the Development Matters age-bands. The assessment information is shared with the Senior Management Team at Pupil Progress meetings at the start of each new half term. This ensures that any concerns are quickly recognised and action is taken.

At the end of the final term in Reception we send a summary of these assessments to the Local Authority for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information with parents/carers in the end-of-year report.

Parents receive an annual written report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress.

Monitoring Arrangements

All monitoring in EYFS will involve the EYFS lead and/or another member of SLT who is an EYFS specialist/has a high level of EYFS understanding.

Book Scrutiny: Early Years observations and appropriate books are included in all book monitoring arrangements for other subjects.

Lesson Observations/drop in: Early Years is included in all lesson observations and drop ins.

Planning: EYFS long and medium term overviews are used in the monitoring process

Pupil Voice: Children in Early Years will be spoken to by various subject leads during monitoring to ensure that they are receiving a quality education and can express this.

How the subject lead keeps their own subject knowledge up to date, and how they ensure staff subject knowledge is also up to date;

We aim to develop and enhance our subject leads personal interest and passion in Early Years through:

1. high quality continual professional development (CPD) e.g: Early Excellence, KEYU
2. networking opportunities through LDST, Sefton and MADCOS
3. engagement with the curriculum lead

We aim to ensure all Early Years staff's knowledge is up to date through:

1. weekly meetings
2. provision of effective resources
3. access to training

