



St Mary's C of E Primary School, Bitteswell

(Part of Inspiring Primaries Academy Trust)

Foundation Stage Policy

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.” Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five” (DfE, 2017)

1. Aims

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At St Mary’s we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

We aim to:

- provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs.
- provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development
- use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- enable choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self confidence.
- work in partnership with Parents/carers and value their contributions.
- ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, have the

opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

2. Early Years Foundation Stage.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

'Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and in the world around them.

Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments.'
(Development Matters. 2012)

We seek to support these four areas in the following ways:

A unique Child.- *Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.*

We aim to support this by understanding each child's personal development and learning through observations, discussions and group work. This will allow us to assess progress, address issues and plan effective next steps. We will also keep children safe and value and respect all children and families equally.

Positive relationships.- *Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.*

We will provide a secure environment which fosters a sense of belonging. The children will be supported to achieve small steps in line with their own abilities and all achievements of effort and independence will be praised. Through the planning of PSED and circle time the children will have the opportunity to discuss and think about their own needs and the needs of their friends and peers. Both children and parents are encouraged to take part in the planning process and to contribute ideas. There is a clear and consistent set of boundaries which the children contribute to during their first week at school in the Autumn term. These are then displayed prominently in the classroom and referred to when necessary.

Enabling Environments- *Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.*

The classroom is set up carefully with different areas promoting different skills, objectives and learning styles. The resources also cover all areas of the EYFS and also different cultures and communities. The children are encouraged to select the resources they need to complete a task or achieve an objective. They children are also encouraged to take ownership of their classroom and wider school and will be expected to treat it respectfully and carefully through positive reinforcement and good role models.

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Wall displays reflect and value children's learning and achievements. All children have the opportunity to contribute equally towards the displays. Careful planning ensures that children have a wide variety of opportunities and have access to rich learning opportunities through play and playful teaching.

Learning and Development. - *Children develop and learn in different ways. The Early Years framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.*

We teach children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development. (See below) We are aware of, and seek to foster the characteristics of effective early learning throughout all areas of the curriculum, and to ensure that *all* children have access to a rich learning experience. Pupils are encouraged to consider which of these learning styles they have used, indicating their judgements regularly on an interactive display within the classroom.

Characteristics of effective Learning:

· Playing and exploring- engagement

Finding out and exploring
Playing with what they know
Being willing to 'have a go'

· Active learning- motivation

Being involved and concentrating
Keeping trying
Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

· Creating and thinking critically- thinking.

Having their own ideas
Making links
Choosing ways to do things

The 2012 Early Years Foundation Stage has three prime areas of learning and a further four specific areas.

Prime areas:

These areas are fundamental to the children's progress in the specific areas and it is paramount that they are not underplayed or missed out in their learning.

As emphasised in the original Tickell review of the EYFS, the prime areas are fundamental to children's successful learning in the specific areas. The specific areas cannot be encountered in isolation from communication and language or personal, social, emotional and physical development since children always experience the world through communication and physical and sensory involvement. A strong foundation in the prime areas is essential as evidence shows that, if it is not securely in place by age five, it holds children back in other areas of learning and development.

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Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their coordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

• **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Specific areas:

• **Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

• **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

• **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

• **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

3. Planning

The planning in the foundation stage is designed to encourage all children to achieve the early learning goals within their foundation year, providing the building blocks for the children to progress.

Through careful planning we aim to:

- Provide a carefully structured curriculum, building on and extending children's knowledge, experiences, interests and skills.
- Provide a wide range of well planned, purposeful, challenging activities that utilize the children's interests and previous knowledge
- Support and develop children's involvement and concentration in order for them to learn effectively
- Present activities in many ways and use a range of teaching strategies
- Develop self-esteem and confidence in their ability to learn
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment, where each child is valued and where racial, religious and gender stereotypes are challenged.

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- Monitor children's progress, identifying areas of concern and taking action to provide support.
- Give opportunities for self assessment and reflection.

The Planning Process:

Long term planning

This is written in conjunction with the rest of the school as part of the connecting curriculum initiative.

Medium term planning

- Medium term plans are written for the following areas:
- Personal Social and Emotional Development.
- RE
- Communication and Language (including reading and writing)
- Mathematics
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Music
- Understanding the World
- Physical Development
- Guided reading (from the Second half of the Spring term)

The plans are topic based and are written after consultation with the children about what they would like to learn within a theme. The themes titles open to allow for a wide variety of scope for planning within each one. The children and parents have the opportunity to contribute to the plans each half term. The plans are broken down into weeks and care has been taken to ensure that all points of 'The unique Child', 'Positive relationships' and 'Enabling Environments' as set out in the Development Matters guidelines are covered regularly each half term.

Short term weekly and daily planning

Short term planning includes weekly Literacy, Mathematics, phonics and topic lesson plans. The daily plans allow for children's interests to be plotted in and also include scope for spontaneous learning opportunities and evaluation of children's learning and the lessons themselves.

4. Staffing and Organisation

There is currently one reception class at St Mary's with a maximum intake of fifteen children. This is sometimes a mixed reception/ Year 1 class depending on individual children's needs.

We maintain an adult/pupil ratio of 1:15 within the reception year - with an additional Learning Support Assistant. The children have daily opportunities for structured and free-flow play both in the classroom and in the outdoor area. This time is supported by an adult, who acts as a facilitator to the child's learning. The teacher liaises with the learning support assistant, regularly involving them in planning, preparation and assessment.

5. Assessment, recording and monitoring

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At St Mary's we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's progress based on the age bands as set out in the development matters booklet. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process through formal and informal observations and through planned activities and child initiated play. Parents are also encouraged to contribute to assessment through the link books, homeschool books and post it notes which are added to the child's assessment folder.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations, baseline assessment, other focused assessments e.g. sound/number, annotated examples of work, photographs, video and information from parents. Each child has an individual Post-it note observation folder for spontaneous observations and a learning journey to showcase work and photographs. We plan for observational assessment when undertaking our medium and short term planning.

Summative assessment

Target Tracker summarises all of the formative assessment undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements against seventeen scales. It summarises children's progress towards the early learning goals. It is completed at the end of each half term by the class teacher. The teacher also undertakes in-house and local cluster group moderation.

For further information see the Assessment Policy.

Teaching and learning in Communication, Language and Literacy and Mathematics is monitored by the literacy and mathematics coordinators regularly throughout the year, through lesson visits, pupil interviews and whole school work sampling. Other areas of learning and development in the foundation stage are monitored in this way by the respective co-ordinators rolling programme dependent on the focus of the school development plan and the needs of the children and school. The Foundation Stage teacher monitors teaching and learning across the Foundation Stage on an on-going basis and analyses the data in conjunction with the head teacher.

6. Learning through Play

Well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, provides key opportunities for young children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. We recognise the importance of the adult support and secure environment in the role of effective play.

Effective play opportunities involve:

- Planning and resourcing a challenging environment
- Supporting children's learning through planned play activity
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play

The secure environment and adult support in play enables children to:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them to make sense of the world
- Practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills

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- Be alone, be alongside others or cooperate as they talk or rehearse their feelings
- Take risks, make and learn from mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems
- Express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe environments.

7. The Learning Environment

We create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experience.

We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence.

Activities are planned for both inside and outside; children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the school day. The learning environment is divided into a variety of different areas: role play, book corner, writing area, exploration area, technology, creative, malleable, sand, water, construction and small world. These areas are carefully arranged to encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the learning environment. The outdoor area is designed for the children to have opportunities to learn using natural materials in a safe environment. It gives children a different experience from the indoor activities and caters for a variety of different learning styles.

Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation. Activities within the classroom are carefully designed to develop the children's skills in all of the areas of learning, where possible with the terms topic and the children's own interests in mind.

8. Liaison with Pre-school Settings and Induction

The children at St Mary's come from a variety of nurseries and pre school settings. We endeavour to visit these settings to meet the children in an environment in which they hopefully feel secure. This gives us a valuable opportunity to talk to the nursery leaders who have a good knowledge of the children and their individual needs. The children also have the opportunity to come with their parents to spend time with us which provides a sense of familiarisation for children, staff and parents. Parents have the opportunity to come to an informal meeting and meet all of the Foundation Stage staff to ask questions and allay any fears they may have.

9. Reception to Year 1 Transition

The Foundation Stage and Year 1 teachers work closely together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible in the following ways:

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the reception year.
- Reception practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer terms, encouraging less dependence on adult support.
- Throughout the Foundation stage year children have opportunities to meet with all staff in the school, particularly, assembly, whole school events, playtime and the annual joint Foundation Stage and Key Stage production.
- Individual records and notes are passed onto the year 1 teacher.

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- Reception and the year 1 teacher meet to discuss individual needs of children in July.
- 'Move Up' days across the school at the end of the summer term.
- Teacher swaps whereby the next teacher visits the children in their current class.
- Parents, class teacher and SENDCo meet to ensure smooth transition
- Reception children visit their new year 1 class and teacher for short periods during the summer term.
- The same phonics and spelling is continued throughout year 1 and 2.
- We have planned learning walks each term for the teachers and support staff to visit both classrooms and gain a greater understanding of where the children are coming from and going to.
- Where possible, the year 1 children continue to enjoy practical learning experiences which gradually becomes more formalised towards the end of the academic year.

10. Home/School Links- Parents and Carers as Partners.

Parents and carers are the children's first educators and we are committed to working in close partnership with them in order to enable each child to achieve his/her full potential.

We seek to maintain an effective partnership between home and school by:

- Demonstrating that we value and respect the role of the parents/carers as the first educators by listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns and aspirations they have. They have the opportunity to contribute to their child's learning journey through the use of post- it notes and parent voice sheets.
- Ensuring that parents/carers are provided with information prior to admissions enabling them to feel confident about the transition process.
- Ensuring arrangements for settling in are flexible enough to give time for children to become secure and for practitioners and parents to discuss children's circumstances, interests, skills and needs.
- Demonstrating that we value linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning.
- Welcoming parents/carers into the classroom to support and enrich the learning opportunities provided. There are also termly opportunities to come and spend time in the classroom with the children. Recent examples of this include a teddy bears picnic, a Mothers' Day Mingle, a Daddy Den-building day and a grandparent's tea party.
- Ensuring parents/carers are informed about the curriculum and school life through regular newsletters, curriculum outlines, termly opportunities for more formal discussions as well as informal opportunities. Information, skills suggestions and examples are posted regularly on the class blog through the school website.
- Sharing information regarding a child's progress and achievements and how parents/carers can support the next stage of learning.
- A communication board informing parents of the weeks learning foci.

11. Equal Opportunities

At St Mary's we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability,

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equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas. For further information see 'Single Equality Scheme'.

12. Inclusion

We meet the needs of all our children 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 to learn effectively;
- · Providing a safe and supportive enabling learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- · Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- · Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- · Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in our academies are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. This is underpinned by our development of character and the need to make the right choice, we provide children with opportunities 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. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children. (see the school Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Equality Duty Compliance)

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Additional adult support may be provided for children with special medical needs e.g. allergies, thus increasing the adult/pupil ratio. Individual Learning Passports identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. The Class teacher would discuss these targets with the child and his/her Parents/carers. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The school's SEN co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary. For further information see Special Educational Needs Policy.

13. Safeguarding/ Health and Safety

Please refer to relevant school policies..

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14. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher and EYFS leader, and will be reviewed every three years or earlier if deemed necessary.

Agreed	Nov 2019						
Review Due	Nov 2022						