



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy.

General statement

At St John's we believe that the 'Foundation Stage' is the foundation on which children build their lives. We recognise that our children develop at different rates and in different ways- emotionally, socially, morally, physically, intellectually and spiritually. All of these areas are important and are catered for in the Foundation Stage.

Staff in the 'Foundation Stage' work together as a team and all participants' contributions is valued. We aim to provide both planned and child initiated learning for the children; this will ensure that our children can access the curriculum.

Foundation Stage Aims

1. To provide learning experiences for all children. (*Learning which is structured, balanced as well as spontaneous, relevant to the child and related to the real world*).
2. To encourage children to enjoy learning, have fun and become independent learners.
3. To provide a curriculum in line with the revised Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2017 and birth to five matters 2021.
4. To provide an ethos in which children, parents and staff feel welcomed and valued.
5. To provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment for the children.
6. To develop within each child good foundations of feelings, attitudes and self-discipline in social and moral responsibilities.
7. To develop awareness and promote respect for all backgrounds, cultures and beliefs.
8. To create a partnership with parents/carers to support and enhance the development of children.
9. To monitor and record children's progress and help them achieve their full potential.
10. To celebrate and encourage children's achievements and further develop their self esteem.
11. To ensure that our curriculum caters for the more able child and extends his/her concepts, attitudes and skills whilst also catering for children who require continuing support to work towards the outcomes.
12. To prepare and support children as they settle into their new environment so that the children feel happy and secure.



Planning

We believe that it is important to plan for a well-structured and supportive learning environment to allow children to investigate and learn. We also place an importance on children's interests and allow for periods of uninterrupted time and space to allow children to produce work of depth and quality. Furthermore, allowing them to revisit and extend their learning. Our intention is to help children become independent by selecting, using and then returning resources.

To enable us to do this we have set up 'continuous' areas in our environment and we enhance these areas at different times.

The indoor provision areas we provide are:

- Wet and dry sand. (We alternate this week by week)
- Water.
- Creative area
- Malleable area
- Marking area.
- Maths area.
- Construction area.
- Small World.
- Role-play area – changeable.
- Domestic role play.
- Computer/interactive whiteboard.
- Music area.
- Story corner
- Snack area.

The outdoor areas of provision we provide are:

- Den making
- Construction
- Large sand
- Water
- Wheeled toys
- Games
- Digging
- Planting
- Small world logs
- Nature area
- Small world resources



- Construction resources
- Mud kitchen
- Climbing
- Fairy Garden

Two continuous provision plans are displayed in each area of learning – 30-50 months and 40-60 month plans. These focus on the development matters statements, resources, key learning opportunities and key questions.

Long Term Planning

Our planning is organised in a cross-curricular way. We take into account the children's interests and may cover different 'mini topics'. Our planning takes into account our indoor and outdoor provision plus the seven different areas of learning, split into prime and specific areas.

Prime Areas:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language
3. Physical Development

Specific Areas:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

Characteristics of Effective Learning:

1. Playing and Exploring
2. Active Learning
3. Thinking creatively and Critically

Medium Term Planning

Medium term planning involves drawing a topic web for each half terms work, based on the seven areas of learning in the EYFS framework. It also includes visits, visitors, seasons and festivals. We also use a 'Child Initiated' planning sheet which is completed throughout each half term to plan and provide provision for each child following their interests. We follow the 'Come and See' RE scheme and this is planned for separately and incorporated into topics whenever possible.



Short Term Planning

Short term planning is taken from the medium term plan and based around the continuous provision and daily organisational events. It includes a balance of focused and informal activities and experiences that are both child-initiated and adult-initiated. We complete observations on the children to help inform our planning, assessments and to help us identify children's interests.

Organisation of setting

We aim to have a learning environment in which children can access resources and be involved in making choices about their learning. Thus give them independence and build up enquiring and problem solving skills. We aim to use the outdoor area as an extension of the indoor learning experiences. The Unique Child reaches out to relate to people and things through the Characteristics of Effective Learning, which move through all areas of learning.

- playing and exploring
- active learning
- creating and thinking critically

Partnership with parent/carers

Aims

It is our aim to support and respect the development of the children, and respect, understand and value the contribution parent/carers make towards their child's learning. We aim to involve parents and provide support, guidance and encouragement to parent/carers as educators. We want to have a partnership of openness, trust, support and collaboration with parents. Some of the ways we involve parents is by sending out questionnaires and learning stories. We informally talk to parents each day about what their child has been doing. We have a parents notice board with photographs and information about what their children have been learning in the setting. There are also parent comment cards to let us know of any interests, visits, new foods they have tasted etc to share with us. We use the 2Build a Profile app using the iPad and at the end of each half term, the assessments shared with the parents and in return parents are invited to respond to what their child has done in school. In September, we ask parents to complete the document 'What to Expect, When?' from the DfE to contribute to the children's baseline assessment.



Objectives

- To have an 'open door' policy and welcome parent/carers into Foundation Stage at any convenient time.
- To discuss with parent/carers their child's needs and health issues.
- To provide two open days and a written report to the parents at the end of their time in Foundation Stage.
- To provide guidance, advice and resources to support home learning.
- To provide parents/carers with information about Foundation Stage before their child starts and throughout their time with us.
- To be aware of parent/carers needs and any changes in circumstances.
- To encourage parent/carers to become involved in Foundation Stage.

Before a child starts Reception

Parents will receive a letter to invite them to a 'Welcome Meeting' in school. At this meeting parents can ask any questions to find out more information from staff. Each parent/carer will receive a Welcome handbook, including a child friendly questionnaire for them to complete with their child. They listen to a presentation given by the Head teacher and class teacher. They can also request a one to one meeting, if this is what they prefer. At this meeting, parents are given the option of a home visit. This is something we do recommend, as we believe it helps the child to settle quicker because they have a familiar face. It also gives the parent/carer time alone to discuss any worries or health issues related to their child etc.

Home visits

Home visits are from two members of staff – the reception teacher and the TA in reception. On the home visit a member of staff will complete any necessary notes regarding the child. As stated earlier this visit also gives the parent/carer time to ask any question or discuss any health issues.

Starting procedure

Children start for the first week with the option of mornings only. This helps to settle the children into school life. If the teacher and parent feel as though their child can attend for whole days, then this is accommodated too.

Transition into Reception



Throughout the previous academic year of the children entering Reception year, we invite the children and parents to a monthly 'stay and play' session. This is where the parents/carers and the children are invited to come along to the setting and play. This gives children the opportunity to play in the setting alongside their parents and feel at ease with school life.

During the summer term, the children will have the opportunity to visit their new class and teacher/TA on a fortnightly basis. This can be extended if needed.

As the children start Reception, parent/carers will be invited in to help settle their child. This gives them the opportunity to look at their child's new class and ask the teacher any further questions.

The teacher will seek out any nursery records from Sunbeams and any other providers and assessments that have been completed for children who have attended nursery, often in the form of the Transition Document.

For children who do not attend Sunbeams Nursery, we can tailor a more frequent transition in the Summer Term based on the needs of the individual child.

Special Needs

The Foundation Stage is part of our whole school policy on Special Needs, and ensures that each individual child gets the appropriate support in line with the code of practice. We recognise that children have different rates of development and we aim to meet the needs of the individual child. Help and advice is often sought from the S.E.N co-ordinator and from medical support agencies, most frequently the speech therapist.

Assessment

We believe in the need for careful assessment and record keeping based around our daily observations of children. In the Foundation Stage assessment is used in many ways to support planning for both the provision and individual children.

Staff are encouraged to closely observe children at play and during more focused times. They are encouraged to actively involve parents in this process by valuing their comments and children's previous achievements. We share children's successes, progress and any concerns we have with parents. We also value parent/carers comments and understand that this information helps us to gain a full picture of the child.



Effective assessment and record keeping helps discussions with parent/carers and in writing reports. It helps us identify what a child needs to do to progress further and assists us in early identification and support of children with special educational needs.

Our assessments, reporting and record keeping include;

1. A 'Baseline Assessment' of each child is made in the first few weeks of them joining their new class – using development matters.
2. Each child is assessed on-going using the development matters statements relevant to their stage of development using the month bands.
3. We are now using Tapestry on the iPad which collates children's assessments using photographs, written observations and cross referenced to development matters and the characteristics of effective learning.
4. A parents evening for the children who start Reception to talk to the parents and go through their assessments and transition documents.
5. Regular contact with parents/carers allows informal assessments to be discussed. Parents/carers will often approach staff with any specific concerns they have.

We have a key worker system in place. This involves the teacher being responsible for children's assessments and focus activities.

Links with the community

We aim to make the wider community feel welcomed, valued and encouraged to contribute to and work with staff. It is our intention that partnerships with the local community and thinking about the wider community will positively contribute to children's personal and intellectual development.

Links include:

- Visits from our Parish Priest and parishioners to assemblies and plays. Children are encouraged to visit church with their families.
- Fundraising events involve local and international appeals.
- Small visits to local shops.
- Visits and visitors linked to our topic.
- Forest School at Platts Lane Lake and Scutchers Acres.

Attendance and Punctuality

We encourage our parents/carers to bring children in and to inform staff if their child is going to be absent for a length of time, often we can help by sending books, games and toys



home for a child. We encourage parents/carers to inform us why their child has been off. This can be done in the following ways; phoning, letter or by speaking to a member of staff.

Behaviour and Discipline

The Foundation Stage is part of the whole school policy to ensure a consistent approach. We recognise that in the Foundation Stage children need considerable support in developing their awareness of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

We have a positive approach to discipline and discuss health and safety issues with the children. We do this through circle time, discussions, role-play and stories.

We have a 'Happy Cup'. This involves letting the children pick a special coloured Happy cup for when they have shown good behaviour, caring and helping others and trying their best in different activities. The children also get a certificate to take home to show the parents their achievement.

Equal Opportunities

We ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, religion, culture, family background, disability, gender, home language, special educational needs or ability.

We ensure that all children feel secure and valued.

In practice, staff will use information about the child's ethnic, religious and cultural heritage to plan activities in the class.

When planning and setting up indoor, outdoor areas, displays and equipment within both classes, we aim to create an environment that encourages a positive attitude to learning and others.

EAL

For children whose home language is not English, we take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. We also try to ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, we assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, we



explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

Staffing

It is our policy that all the staff in the Foundation Stage are trained and therefore have a better understanding of the setting and age range they will be working with. Our setting regards training as highly important and therefore whenever possible will include staff in INSET days and training courses, with feedback built into this programme. New members of staff will be given support and an induction programme including a mentor.

Signature: Emma Riley

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Review Due: September 2024