



ST STEPHEN'S CEVA PRIMARY SCHOOL, BATH

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

NOTE: THIS POLICY IS A WORKING DOCUMENT AND WILL BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY BY THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE LEADER, WHO WILL ADAPT AND MAKE ANY CHANGES AS NECESSARY WITH THE CONSENT OF THE HEAD TEACHER, GOVERNORS AND EARLY YEARS COLLEAGUES.

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1 INTRODUCTION

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their 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.'

(‘Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’ DCSF 2014)

The Early Years are some of the most informative and important of an individual's development - the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives, not simply a preparation for the next stage of education. Children entering the Reception Year (the final year of the Early Years Foundation Stage) should experience a secure, happy environment in which they know they are valued as individuals and in which they can confidently establish these firm foundations for future learning.

Early Years learning should start from what the children already know and should acknowledge that there is potential in all children which must be accessed through the child initiated activities in which they are engaged. Expectations should be realistic as well as challenging to each individual.

Every child is valued as a unique individual – a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Teaching and learning are based on the understanding that children develop at different rates. Their attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others, so praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and reward, for all individuals, whatever their rate of learning, supports and encourages the development of a positive attitude to learning.

2 AIMS

To provide an education which will:

- Enable children to make an effective transition from home/playgroup/nursery to school
- Secure a broad and balanced curriculum which fosters the emotional, social, physical, moral, cultural, spiritual, intellectual, and creative development of all the children
- Ensure that all children have access to the curriculum and make progress proportionate with their developing abilities, irrespective of their gender, ethnic or social background or special educational needs
- Enable children to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding to reach the Early Learning Goals
- Ensure a smooth transition for pupils moving from Foundation Stage to Year 1

During the Reception Year we aim to:



- Provide an environment that is safe, happy, caring and sharing, stimulating and challenging which will foster high self-esteem and positive attitudes to school and learning, trust, confidence, curiosity, responsibility, independence, creativity and critical thinking
- Develop children's confidence and ability to express their own thoughts, ideas and feelings and to communicate them clearly to others, knowing that everyone can feel secure and valued
- Develop the desire and ability to engage co-operatively with other children and adults and to respect each other
- Provide a curriculum that is broad, balanced, purposeful, relevant and creative so developing firm foundations for future learning
- Provide opportunities for children to experience and engage in a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development through a combination of adult led and planned, purposeful play activities in all areas of learning
- Ensure the curriculum is structured with a wide range of stimulating first hand experiences through which children develop their concepts
 - Opportunities for physical and mental activities
 - Opportunities to investigate, explore and make mistakes without experiencing a sense of failure
- Provide children with opportunities to learn both in and out of doors
- Encourage children to work independently, to make choices, enable decision-making and develop a sense of self reliance
- Enable children to deal confidently with new experiences and change
- Develop understanding of the aspects of healthy living and well-being
- Establish strong links between home and school ~ working in partnership with parents/carers
- Provide a rich and varied learning environment that encourages children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential
- Enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners
- Foster children's self-esteem and help them to build positive relationships with other people
- Develop children's self-respect and encourage them to respect the idea, attitudes, values and feeling of others
- Show respect for all cultures and, in doing so, to promote positive attitudes toward other people
- Enable children to understand their community and help them to feel valued as part of it
- Help children to grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens who are able to make informed choices



3 PRINCIPLES

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes.

3.1 A UNIQUE CHILD

Every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We aim to support each child in order that s/he becomes a skilful communicator and competent learner. 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. They are encouraged to develop positive attitudes to learning through praise, encouragement, celebration and rewards.

3.1.1 INCLUSION

We aim to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference within all children, helping them to learn to value different aspects of their own life and that of others.

It is important that all children and families feel included, safe and valued, are treated as individuals are not discriminated against and are listened to and respected.

3.1.2 WELFARE

'Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.'

We aim to:

- Ensure the welfare of each child
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate to the children's stage of development and individual needs
- Ensure that the learning environments, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child experiences appropriate, enjoyable and challenging learning opportunities

3.2 POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Children learn to be strong and independent when they feel secure in their relationships when they know that adults are interested in every aspect of them as individuals and are in harmony with their home carers. We aim to develop professional interaction that is based on caring, trusting relationships and respectful acknowledgement of the feelings of the children and their families.

3.2.1 GOOD BEHAVIOUR



Positive relationships and good behaviour and self-discipline are essential in any community and we have high expectations of the Reception children in these areas.

We aim to encourage children to:

- Recognise socially acceptable behaviour
- Promote a positive self-image and self-esteem by the encouragement of respect for self, others, property and the environment
- Take increasing responsibility for and accept the consequences of their words and actions
- Agree the minimum of relevant class rules that are understood by every child

Emphasis is always on the positive through praise.

3.3 ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

We aim to provide stimulating indoor and outdoor environments offering experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable, so giving children the confidence to explore and learn in secure, safe spaces.

The learning environment includes both indoor and outdoor areas.

3.3.1 INDOOR

The classroom has:

- Book area, creative area, writing area, table-top games and puzzles, musical instruments, focussed teaching area
- We aim to ensure that the indoor environment is:
- Bright, attractive, orderly and well ventilated
- Have areas suitable for quiet learning, focussed individual or paired/group learning, comfortable relaxation, investigation, creativity and construction,
- Organised to encourage children to take a pride in and responsibility for their environment and to develop independence in the selection, care and return of resources and equipment

These areas are also available to the children outside as well.

3.3.2 OUTDOOR

The outdoor area has:

- Children have independent access to the Learning Lodge, raised bed, planted with flowers or vegetables, covered sandpit, textured surfaces, tree for shade, large wooden apparatus

The shed houses all large outdoor play equipment

We aim to ensure that our outdoor environment:



- Offers opportunities for fresh air and exercise in a secure environment
- Promote physical development, health and general well being
- Provide some covered and shaded areas
- Has a variety of features, different surfaces, texture and levels
- Offer a range of opportunities and challenges for independent and supervised exploration and experiences in all areas of learning

3.4 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

We acknowledge that children learn in different ways and at different rates. The Foundation Stage Curriculum is delivered through three prime areas and four specific areas of learning. The Prime Areas of learning are not dependent on the specific areas. Encompassing these areas is the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. We aim to provide experiences and activities that promote learning across all areas.

3.4.1 PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Children are encouraged to develop self-confidence, self-esteem, independence and friendships.

They learn that they should respect and care for each other, other people, their belongings and the environments in which they play, learn and live.

They are given opportunities to express their feelings and practice the verbal and listening skills necessary to get along with each other and have fun.

3.4.2 COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

The most important aspect of this area is the development of good speaking and listening skills.

There are many opportunities for role & imaginative play, 'Show and Tell' sessions, the sharing and offering of ideas. A structured approach during focus sessions will be used.

3.4.3 PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Children develop their gross and fine motor skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. They are encouraged to understand the importance of being healthy and active, to recognise ways to do this and to apply them to their everyday life at home and school.

3.4.4 LITERACY

Children will be taught how to make links between letters and sounds. The teaching of phonics, early reading and writing ensures continuity and progression of skills. Thematic activities encourage the extension of vocabulary, develop an interest in stories and comprehension, encourage the



use of non-fiction texts as a source of information gathering and develop a range of writing skills.

3.4.5 MATHEMATICS

Children learn key skills and concepts through games, activities, 'real life' scenarios and ICT. They explore and develop their understanding of counting, recognising and naming numbers, calculating using simple addition and subtraction and shapes, space and measures. They are encouraged to apply their skills to independent problem solving activities.

3.4.6 UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

Children will be guided and supported to find out more about the world in which they live and the people they might encounter through activities involving: Forest School; Exploration and Investigation, Designing and Making, Time, Place, Communities, and ICT.

3.4.7 EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN

Being creative enables children to express themselves and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings through role and imaginative play, movement, dance, materials and media, designing and making, music and song.

4 PLAYING AND EXPLORING

'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others.' (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage) Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations.

For young children, purposeful play is an essential and rich part of the learning process. It encourages:

Social skills and self-esteem.

- Creativity - to develop imaginary situations and language
- Encourages the ability to make choices
- Play provides opportunities to practise skills, explore new and challenging situations, discover and solve problems and extend ideas and understanding
- Play develops confidence, concentration, and perseverance, problem solving and critical thinking skills
- Offers opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

The Practitioners will make judgements about the balance of activities led by the children and activities led or guided by adults. The Practitioners will respond to the children's needs and interests. They will be supported in a warm, caring environment and they will be prepared for Year 1.



4.1 ACTIVE LEARNING

Physical and mental challenges support effective learning and decision making. Active learning should involve other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods of time. They should encourage children to concentrate and persevere if they encounter difficulties. The children should be able to enjoy their achievements.

4.2 CREATIVITY AND CRITICAL THINKING

Playing with ideas in different contexts and with a variety of resources allows children to make connections, establish better understanding and find new ways of doing things. When sensitively supported, children develop their creativity, decision-making skills and ability to think critically and to ask questions.

Children will experience a wide variety of relevant and appropriate experiences to promote learning and achievement so leading to the acquisition of skills, concepts and knowledge. There is a balance between physical and quieter activities and between challenging new opportunities and secure familiar experiences which take account of prior learning to allow practice, consolidation and extension of skills knowledge and understanding. All aim to encourage independence, concentration, perseverance and a desire to succeed.

5 EFFECTIVE LEARNING

Children learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to provide opportunities that allow children to learn in the ways that best suit them; playing, talking, observing, investigating and problem solving, questioning, experimenting, testing, repeating, reflecting and responding to adults and each other.

The curriculum is delivered through a combination of adult-led focussed learning and child-chosen/child-initiated activities. The learning may be delivered through a wide variety of activities aimed at the whole class, groups, pairs or individuals that take place both in and out of doors.

Throughout the year we encourage children to be increasingly independent and responsible for their own learning, to plan, become involved in reviewing the way in which they learn and to reflect on how they learned.

6 EFFECTIVE TEACHING

We aim to:

- Focus on motivating children and developing their skills
- Set next steps in the children's learning and share these with them informally



- Plan learning with clear objectives that the children are encouraged to understand and work towards
- Track children's achievements in order to ensure appropriate continuity and progressions of learning
- Ensure all activities are assessed from a risk benefit analysis
- Provide an attractive enabling learning environment to motivate and celebrate all aspects of learning

7 ORGANISATION AND PLANNING

Medium Term plans and weekly plans guide the delivery of the curriculum. Flexibility is required if a particular area of learning requires more input the following day. The children's interests are observed and encouraged. These are included in future planning.

A group focus sheet is provided for all practitioners which clearly identifies children that are being supported in each area of learning.

Systematic planning ensures continuity and progression in the introduction and development of specific basic skills and concepts.

There is a balance of adult led, child chosen and child initiated activities to ensure all required learning is covered and developed. Opportunities are provided to rehearse and develop learning and to encourage the independent application of skills.

Assessment through observation; both formative and summative monitor achievement and guide planning at class, group and individual level.

8 ASSESSMENTS AND RECORD KEEPING

A mixture of formative and summative assessment takes place throughout the year, which informs the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile as an end of year assessment.

A baseline assessment is made during the induction period of Term 1 when evidence is gathered from pre-school records, parent profile meetings and Practitioners' observations within the school day. These are assessed through an online baseline assessment programme and also against Development matters statements. Formative assessment continues throughout each week and term to ensure planning is specific to the needs of a group or individual.

Records are kept of each child's learning related to teacher-led and child chosen tasks as well as observations/judgements relating to child-initiated activities. Summative assessments of letter sounds and names, numbers, high frequency keywords are completed regularly.

Parents' comments in questionnaires, reading records as well as discussions between parents and Practitioners are all added to support the child's record of learning achievements



The Practitioners participates in county led moderation meetings to validate teacher assessment and ensure external quality assurance.

At the end of the Foundation year the children's profile results are given to the Year 1 teachers. These are explained in detail at a transition meeting at the end of the academic year.

9 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Children who present special educational needs are identified as early as possible within the school year and appropriate intervention is made in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. Parents are involved at all stages.

10 INCLUSION

All children require activities at a level at which they can achieve success in order to develop and maintain their confidence and self-esteem. A wide variety of activities ensure consolidation of skills and understanding before moving on to new challenges.

More able children should experience a broad curriculum embracing the challenge of problem solving and investigative activities which extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding in order to motivate and extend them at all times.

11 THE OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

11.1 RATIONALE

Everything has the potential to be learnt out of doors as effectively as indoors and often more memorably!

It should, therefore, be a childhood entitlement to be offered a safe, secure, broad, stimulating and well-planned learning environment out of doors as well as within the classroom. We aim to provide a safe, secure, stimulating and challenging learning environment

11.2 AIMS

- To provide a broad, balanced 'outdoor' curriculum
- To deliver aspects of all areas of the Revised Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum through outdoor learning
- To provide opportunities for children to be more active and so promote a healthier life style
- To encourage children to play and explore the outdoor environment developing awe and wonder of the natural world
- To encourage children to work imaginatively



- To develop children's confidence, autonomy and independence to play in a larger environment
- To develop all aspects of social skills especially sharing, turn-taking, co-operation, negotiation and purposeful play
- To enable children to develop a sense of themselves as capable achievers

11.3 PROVISION WILL OFFER

- Space to be physically active
- Opportunities to develop and refine the full range of large and fine motor skills
- Time to observe and explore
- Quiet areas for reflection
- 'Open-ended' resources to inspire the imagination during role and imaginative play, mark-making, construction, creative activities, exploration of natural materials, scientific and mathematical exploration, problem solving; development of literacy skill

12 TRANSITION PROCEDURES

12.1 STARING SCHOOL – INDUCTION

For young children change and transition can be overwhelming. For this reason we value the importance of a positive introduction to school for children, parents and carers.

Children join St Stephen's Primary School usually having attended one or more of the pre-schools and nurseries within our local area. We aim to make this a smooth transition, providing reassuring continuity as well as a range of new experiences to meet the anticipation of joining a learning environment.

Our admission arrangements are carefully organised and regularly reviewed to ensure we are meeting the needs of the children, Parents are fully informed about all aspects of induction.

There is an annual school entry in September of the school year in which a child will be 5 years old.

We begin to meet new pupils and welcome families during the summer terms of the school year prior to entry

- Parents and children are invited to visit the school for a tour during school hours
- Parents are invited to a Parents' Information Evening in May or June prior to their child's entry to school. This meeting is led by the EYFS leader. The parents are given the opportunity to meet the EYFS staff, the Chair of Governors and any other adults that may be involved in the support and well-being of the children.



Parents are given a welcome pack with information about the child's class and the school.

- During term 6 the EYFS practitioners visits a number of the local pre-schools and nurseries attended by the new-intake children in order to meet them in their familiar setting.

We realise that many children have been in full-time attendance at pre-school or nursery settings. However, the children's welfare and well-being are of paramount importance and it is essential that they do not become over-tired or overwhelmed by the transition to school life. We believe they should be given a gradual introduction to school. We aim for this to be a gentle familiarisation to their new setting and its routines and expectations as well as becoming acquainted with new adults. This induction period takes three weeks with children being split into two groups in both classes.

Week 1 – Home Visits

Week 2 – Group B am plus lunch, Group A pm

Week 3 – Group A and B plus lunch

Week 4 – Full time school

It allows time for valuable entry assessments to be made in order to ensure the curriculum is appropriate and relevant to each child.

The Practitioners will always be available for parents to arrange suitably appropriate times for a discussion if there are any concerns about a child.

12.2 PARENTS/CARERS AS PARTNERS

Parents are the first and most important educators of a child. We encourage their involvement in all aspects of learning and encourage a partnership based on mutual trust and respect.

Parents of EYFS pupils are given regular details of class organisation, routines, topics and ways to become involved in and support their child's learning at home. They are asked to support the development of reading on a daily basis and to comment in their child's reading books and contribute to the Learning Journals

Parents are asked to give their views on their child's progress as well as being invited to two formal school parents' evenings.

A summary and celebration of learning is given to parents at the end of the Reception Year in the form of a learning journey.

12.3 RECEPTION TO YEAR 1 TRANSITION

Throughout the year children from both year groups are involved in playtimes and many other shared experiences (worship, school activities, productions etc.) which involve interaction with the Year 1 pupils and staff.



- During Term 6 there is a phased introduction into year, which focuses on story time. This links with the other year groups in Phase 1.

13 SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE

The EYFS children are included in the school's safeguarding policy.

Safety of the EYFS pupils is of paramount importance. We recognise that children learn best when they feel healthy, safe and secure.

From their first day in the Reception class, safety issues and safe practices within all areas of the curriculum are taught and consistently reinforced in order that children are encouraged to:

- Know and respond to the boundaries of the indoor areas, outdoor play areas and school boundaries
- Move safely and appropriately both in and out of doors
- Have regard for their own safety and that of others
- Use all tools and equipment correctly, responsibly and with appropriate care
- Understand and adhere to the class rules which are clear, consistent and carefully explained and reinforced throughout the year
- Know and conform to the 'end of day' routine for leaving the classroom and meeting appropriate adults
- Develop caring and empathetic friendships
- Tell an adult immediately, if they feel worried, frightened or in any way bothered by a situation at school or at home, an adult or another child

13.1 KEY PERSON

Parents will be informed at the Induction meeting in September about our Key Person arrangements. Both Practitioners in each class will be the key person to all children in their care unless an individual support assistant has been allocated to a child with a statement. In this case the class teacher will still be the child's key worker alongside the support assistant. The Practitioners will ensure they have daily contact with all families to develop strong, trusting relationships. These key persons will be contributing to the care of the children in the class. The class teacher will have overall responsibility for all children and families.

14 ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESSES

Any accident or illness is dealt with following the main school First Aid Policy and procedures.



15 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All teaching and non-teaching staff are responsible for ensuring that every pupil has access to the whole curriculum and opportunities to make the greatest possible progress irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability:

- To use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- To value the contribution of every child