

**ST. PAUL'S**  
**CHURCH OF ENGLAND**  
**PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**ENGAGE - INSPIRE - ACHIEVE**

**The Christian family of St Paul's... moving forward together.  
A caring, exciting and happy school where everyone  
succeeds!**

**Early Years Policy**  
**January 2017**

## **Policy Statement**

The Early Years Foundation Stage Policy in this school reflects the value and importance of Early Years education, both during and beyond the Foundation Stage. It provides a framework for staff which gives guidance on practice, and outlines procedures for planning, teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluating the curriculum. The policy contributes towards raising educational standards within the school and ensures that the needs of the youngest children are met within the context of whole school policies, curriculum planning, agreed teaching approaches and organisational structures. The Early Years curriculum is being developed in accordance with "Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012".

This sets the standards that *"ensure children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's "school readiness" and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for future progress through school and life"* EYFS p 2

## **Links to other policies**

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Assessment
- Media Policy
- Medication
- Behaviour
- Premises
- Health and Safety
- Equal Opportunities
- SEND

## **Aims and principles**

Staff at St Paul's Primary School believe that the following aims and principles underpin their practice and reflect a shared vision of how children develop and learn, the activities and experiences which help children make progress, and the type of stimulating environment which promotes opportunities for learning.

We aim to achieve these principles through the implementation of the 4 standards for learning, Development and care for children from birth to 5 as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework:

A unique Child

Positive relationships

Enabling Environments

Learning and Development.

## **Definitions and indicators**

- Early Years education is valued, seen as the foundation for education and the beginning of a continuum of learning throughout the primary phase.
- The curriculum experiences of children are appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- The identification of and provision for special educational needs of children are included.
- The importance of 'play', 'first hand' experiences, creativity and critical thinking and an active curriculum are recognised in planning learning opportunities for young children.
- There is shared understanding of the emotional & developmental needs of young children, how they learn and develop skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Policies and schemes of work include teaching and learning for children from 4 years old.
- The needs of the children are considered carefully in matters of organisation, management and administration.
- Children experience a smooth transition from home, pre-school or nursery, into the reception class & into KS1.
- Statutory curricular obligations laid down by DFEE and the requirements for the completion of the Foundation Stage Profile are followed.

## **The role of the curriculum**

### **A unique child**

**“Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured” EYFS 2012**

### **Induction / Parental Involvement**

Reception children are admitted in small groups throughout the first 2 weeks of term. Decisions as to which key worker group the children will be placed are based on discussions with parents and feeder nurseries.

Staff at St Paul's Primary School believe that staff visiting the children in their current setting, inviting families to pre-school visits to school and induction meetings and booklets enable parents to share valuable information which can help make a smooth

transition from home, nursery or childminder to school and allows parents the opportunity to ask any questions they may have about starting school.

Staff also recognise that a continued and ongoing effective partnership with parents and other carers has a positive impact on children's development and learning, and therefore aim to provide opportunities for parents to keep staff informed about their child's development or any concerns they may have. Staff are always available to talk, news letters are sent home and displayed detailing school events, workshops to help parents and PTA events and fund raisers are done regularly. Home-school communication is further maintained through individuals reading diaries and weekly newsletters updated on the website. Parents are made aware of what their child is learning via weekly class home-school-learning link letters which offer suggestions to enhance and consolidate their learning at home. All information is also posted on our web page.

Staff aim to create a welcoming, happy and relaxed environment which enables parents and other carers to feel confident in their role as a partner in their children's education.

All children and their families are valued and respected and no child or family is discriminated against. Every child matters is at the heart of the ethos of the Foundation team and all children's individual interests and needs are catered for including those with special educational needs inline with whole school policy (See SEN policy) Families for whom English is an additional language and children are supported inline with the whole school EAL policy (see EAL policy)

### Health and well-being

**“Children's health is an integral part of their emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual well-being and is supported by attention to these aspect” EYFS 2007**

Milk and fruit are offered as healthy snacks in the mornings. Healthy eating is promoted throughout school through choices at the salad bar. Children have opportunities for physical development through access to the outdoor area for learning and a weekly a PE session in the hall from the Spring term.

### Positive Relationships

**“Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.” EYFS 2012.**

All staff involved in the education of young children need to be able to develop good relationships with the children in their care so that they can feel secure, respected and thus able both to make mistakes and cope with minor failures as well as building confidently on their successes.

A team approach is in place; lead by a member of the senior leadership team. All staff's experience, expertise, skills and ideas are valued and all are involved in any changes and decision making that may take place to improve the standards in Foundation Stage.

Parent helpers and students are welcomed and work alongside trained staff to enhance children's learning.

All teaching assistants are trained to Level 3 or undergoing training, two full time members of staff are paediatric first aid trained including the Unit Head in accordance with Statutory requirements of EYFS 2012.

### Effective transitions.

#### Key workers

“Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a secure relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents” EYFS 2012

Each child has a key worker who will

- be involved in making observations to support assessments towards ELG's.
- be a point of contact for parents to discuss any issues or concerns.
- be a person the child can talk to about any worries or concerns or share and celebrate achievements.
- Offer reassurance, develop confidence and skills and respond to the child's needs without the child becoming over dependent on them.

Links are developed between key worker in other settings to share information on children who attend before and after school clubs. All children and their families are informed who their key worker is before induction visits take place

### Staff Development

The identification of training needs for teaching and non-teaching staff will take place through Performance Management and/or staff development interviews, as outlined in the whole school policies.

The Foundation Stage Leader will ensure that:

- ◆ Appropriate dissemination of training/materials/good practice takes place regularly.
- ◆ A record of INSET activities is maintained.
- ◆ There is an assessment of the impact of INSET etc on the quality of teaching & learning.

### 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” EYFS 2007**

The Foundation Stage Unit at St Paul's Constable Lee Primary School contains 2 indoor and 1 outdoor classroom.

All children have access to bathroom facilities and the cloak room in the unit. The children also have access to other equipment and facilities throughout the school such as the computer suite and hall.

Equipment is stored within the department and throughout school in general stock. We try to ensure that we use equipment and resources which reflect the all the communities the children come from and the wider world. The budget is managed by the Foundation Stage Leader; decisions regarding purchases are made through discussions with staff and the needs of the children.

### Observation, assessment and planning

**“All planning starts with observing children in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning.” EYFS 2008**

Staff use information from parents and the child's previous setting, plus their own observations of children on visits in order to establish what each child already knows, understands and can do, to form a baseline assessment with in the first few weeks.

Each learning environment is carefully planned and set up to provide activities and resources which take into account the children's many starting points and offers many levels of learning in groups or in solitary play. We encourage children to have selection over activities and resources provided through continuous provision as we believe this promotes independence, decision making and creativity.

Staff are encouraged to observe children working in continuous provision in order to assess individual's abilities interests and development, this information then leads into future planning and decisions regarding the resources and activities for each environment. Making links in children's learning is encouraged and staff are aware that learning is often holistic and take this into account when observing and assessing learning in each area.

Through out the year staff observe children in order to make secure judgements as to children's progress towards Early Learning Goals. This process of assessment provides a framework for future planning which then enables staff to meet each child's future learning needs. The notes, photographs, samples of work, teacher assessment sheets also form a record of achievement known as Foundation Stage Profile for each child.

The Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement and is completed throughout the year the information is feed back to parents informing them about their child's progress towards the Early Learning Goals at the end of the reception year.

Assessment using PIPS is also undertaken twice in the reception year. A baseline assessment is administered as soon as possible on entry to the reception class and at the end of the reception year to ascertain progress. Again, the results of these assessments are feedback to parents.

Reporting to parents takes place through Parents Evenings, where parents are invited into school to discuss their child's targets, achievements, interests and experiences, and also annually through a written report based on the Foundation Stage Profile.

The Foundation Stage Profile and PIP's results are discussed with the child's year 1 teacher and used as a basis to inform future learning in year 1

Regular monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum takes place within each Early Years Foundation Stage as stated in whole school policy.

### Learning and development

“Children develop and learn in different ways. Practitioners teach children by ensuring challenging playful opportunities across prime and specific areas of learning and development. They foster the characteristics of effective early learning” EYFS 2012

“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” EYFS 2007

“In play children learn at their highest level” EYFS 2007

“When children play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things” EYFS 2007

Staff are aware of the ways children learn and offer activities and resources that encourage children to learn in a variety of ways through independent choices in continuous provision and adult lead activities, both inside and outside. Teachers extend the learning through modelling activities, talking, thinking out loud, asking questions, encouraging and scaffolding understanding, listening and observing children's responses and actions so as to move they're learning on. The use of ICT is used to support children's learning across the curriculum.

### Early Years Curriculum

The Early Years Curriculum is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (DfES 2007) and is planned to lead smoothly into the National Curriculum at KS 1 in a way which is relevant and meaningful for all children. At St Paul's we believe just as when building a house firm foundations are essential for further building blocks of learning to be secure and stable.

### Learning and development

All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development



There are four specific areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied. These areas are

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

**Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'

**Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements

**Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Early Learning Goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage, but are not intended to be a curriculum in themselves.

We aim to provide a coherent curriculum that provides a clear focus for learning and draws together relevant activities which contribute to the development of the whole child. Thus children are able to use and extend what they know, can do and understand within a realistic context.

The wider curriculum at St Paul's consists of:

- Educational visits and visitors to enhance children's learning.
- Links with local community organisations.

### **Staff training**

The identification of training needs for teaching and non-teaching staff will take place through Performance Management and/or staff development interviews, as outlined in the whole school policies.

The Foundation Stage Leader will ensure that:

- ◆ Appropriate dissemination of training/materials/good practice takes place regularly.
- ◆ A record of INSET activities is maintained.
- ◆ There is an assessment of the impact of INSET etc. on the quality of teaching & learning.

### **Visitors and the use of school premises**

If any member of staff wishes to invite a visitor in to support the curriculum (e.g. Fire Fighters, parents with a new baby) they must first discuss this with their Unit Head and the Headteacher. Only after agreement from the Head Teacher can the visitor enter school. Children are NEVER left unsupervised with external visitors, regardless of safeguarding check outcomes.

### **Additional materials**

#### **Food and drink**

Information is gained from parents before children are admitted regarding any special dietary requirements, preferences and allergies a child has and any special health requirements. Parents are made aware on signs outside the classroom, the weekly newsletter and website of the snacks for the week. Fresh drinking water is available at all times

A hygienic 'kitchen area' has been created where the children and staff prepare snacks together.

### **Accidents and injury**

Two full time members of staff are Paediatric first aid trained, including the Unit Head. A written record of injuries and treatment is kept. Parents are informed of head injuries.

### **Risk assessments**

Yearly risk assessments for all areas are undertaken. Daily safety checks are undertaken by staff and recorded. How risks can be removed or minimised are also recorded and staff inform unit head.

**POLICY REVIEW**

The Early Years Policy will be reviewed annually

This policy will be ratified by the Governing Body in January 2017

Signed by Mr W Aitkin (Chair of Governors) *W. Aitkin* Date 31.1.17

This policy will be reviewed on or before the following date: January 2018