



Together we love to learn
and learn to love

St. Mary's CE Infant School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

St Mary's Infant school is committed to inspiring every child. We embed the Christian value of love across school life because we believe that a child who feels loved, secure and happy is a learning child. We encourage our children to achieve their potential, develop their talents, celebrate their uniqueness, and rejoice in their relationships with others.

March 2017

Please also see the following policies:
Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
Safeguarding Policy



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Our Aims:

- To provide a secure, safe, caring and stimulating environment.
- To ensure that all children are valued.
- To build on what the child already knows and develop a positive attitude and enjoyment for learning.
- To provide a range of opportunities to learn through direct experience, enquiry, drama and active exploration, in the classroom and outdoors, using a wide variety of equipment and materials.
- To encourage independence and confidence.
- To value the role parents and carers can play to work together in partnership.

We want children to be engaged in the learning process and for their learning to be relevant and purposeful. Therefore, we believe that children learn best by doing. We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is an ideal vehicle for young children's learning. Play helps children to explore, investigate and make sense of the world around them. Play allows children to be challenged in their thinking and helps them to practice and rehearse skills and to be motivated in their learning. Children are inquisitive and curious and we wish to build upon this in a positive and enjoyable manner.

Planning

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based around four Key Themes, three 'Prime areas of Learning' and four 'Specific Areas of Learning'.

The Themes:

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

Each theme is linked to an important Principle:

A Unique Child

Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person*.

Enabling Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

The three prime areas are:

- Personal Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

The four specific areas are:

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

*All children are allocated a named member of staff who is referred to as their key person



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Each half term we follow a new topic that has been carefully selected based on young children's interests.

All topics start with a question that encourage children to engage with their learning through practical investigations and hands-on experiences, developing their own curiosity, thoughts and ideas which in turn inspire children to take an active role in their learning.

Planning includes:

- long term plans incorporating the seasons of the year and the overarching whole school themes,
- plans for continuous provision inside and outside,
- weekly and daily plans based on all prime and specific areas.

Assessment

- Children entering school are observed during their first weeks, to provide baseline information.
- A whole-school phonics assessment is started in Reception that travels with the child through the school.
- Monitoring of each child will take place through observations, discussions, photographs and record keeping and planned assessment. All evidence is collected and collated in each child's profile which parents are actively encouraged to contribute to through the 'Wow' slips.
- Progress is recorded on Target Tracker (electronic system used) and is updated at the end of each half term. At the end of the year the E.Y.F.S. profile results are sent to the LA (Oxfordshire County Council).
- An end-of-year report for each child summarising the achievements from the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is sent to parents.
- The profile data is discussed with the Year 1 teacher so that she/he can continue to help the children to achieve the early learning goals where necessary, when children transfer to Year 1.

Assessment through Observation

Children give indications of their learning all the time through what they say, what they do, how they approach activities etc. and it is primarily by observing children that judgements are made to inform records and planning. Specific time for planned observations is allocated each week, which may take place in the form of a general classroom observation, e.g. of an activity, or an observation of a particular child. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways e.g. photographs and notes on Target Tracker, annotations on work, longer observation sheets and iPad filming.

Transition

We aim to make transition from a pre-school setting or within school when children move year groups as easy and comfortable as possible for all involved. The foundation team work closely with professionals within school and other settings, ensuring the children have visits so they become comfortable within their new environment. We have regular dialogue with parents and professionals to ensure we gain a full overview of the child and their needs. Children are invited to visit St. Mary's in the summer term. Where possible a member of the Foundation Team will visit children in their nursery/pre-school setting. If visits are not viable the class teacher will liaise with the setting through telephone conversations. During the first three days of school parents are given the opportunity to collect their child after lunch in order to aid transition.



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Partnership with Parents

We greatly value the contribution and knowledge of our parents and carers and seek to work in partnership with parents and carers as much as possible. Formal meetings which are offered to parents include:

- A summer visit for the child and parents to visit the current class
- An admissions meeting to explain school and class routines
- Autumn term: parental consultations to discuss settling and any initial language or behavioural needs
- A reading meeting to inform parents how phonics and reading is taught and how they can support at home
- Spring term: parental consultation to discuss progress, Foundation Stage Profile achievements and settling into year one as appropriate
- Summer term: parents receive school report, reporting targets already being met and next steps on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)
- Links through learning activities as and when appropriate, e.g. share a book morning, open invitation to join phonics session after a phonics workshop, accompanying an autumn walk, invitation to teddy bears picnic.
- We hold parent meetings and stay-and-play sessions each term.

Admissions Policy

All children are admitted in September as full time.

Equal Opportunities

In line with the Schools' Equal Opportunities Policy, no children in the Foundation Stage class will be discriminated against or disadvantaged because of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.

Whenever the term parent is used it refers to anyone who has parental responsibility for the child.