



St Peter's Methodist Primary School

EYFS Policy

Written: March 2019

Agreed at Pupil and Curriculum Committee:
April 2019

Reviewed by Pupil and Curriculum Committee:

Next Review Date: April 2022

Context and Principles

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up." (DfE, 2014)

Aims and Objectives of the EYFS

- To offer a broad and balanced curriculum organised into seven equal areas of learning.
- To offer stimulating and highly creative learning experiences where children learn through first hand experiences.
- To offer appropriate levels of challenge and support, for every child.
- To develop in each child a firm foundation of life skills.
- To model thinking and problem solving strategies.
- To use mistakes and misconceptions as positive opportunities for learning.
- To involve parents and carers in every step of the children's learning and development.
- To provide a safe, welcoming and highly creative learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, where every child's unique needs and interests are met.

Four principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The EYFS is based upon four principles which are outlined in the Development Matters Framework (DfEE 2014)

1. Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships which are supportive and responsive to the children's needs, feelings and interests. The team aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with both the children and their families. Children's work and learning experiences, as well as home 'Love to Learn' challenges will be communicated through the Tapestry app which parents are also encouraged to contribute and respond to. In addition to this there are several opportunities throughout the year for parents to come and celebrate learning alongside their child during 'Stay and Play' sessions.

The adults in EYFS are there to facilitate learning. They do this through observations and interactions. Our staff know the children very well and have a sound understanding of child development. This ensures that the adults enhance and extend the learning at the appropriate level.

Adults will:

- Spot 'teachable moments'.
- Engage in quality interactions.
- Record the progress each child makes.
- Go to the children & take the learning to them.
- Enhance learning not interrupt it.
- Ask 'I wonder...' questions.

2. A Unique child

We recognise that every child is unique and will support them to become resilient, capable, confident and self-assured learners. As practitioners we will observe each child's development and learning, assess progress and plan for next steps, identifying any need for additional support. Focus children will be rotated throughout the year to allow a deep understanding of that child's progress, interests and motivations. We will also work with children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture in partnership with families.

3. Enabling Environments

We recognise that children learn and develop well in enabling environments in which their experiences respond to individual children's needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers. Our environment aims to offer stimulating resources, rich learning opportunities through play and adult led tasks as well as support for children to take risks and explore. Our environment, both indoors and out is organised into learning areas where children can be independent in locating and accessing resources.

The children are supported to select what they want to do (based on their learning and development needs) in each area. The principal is that resources are accessible to the children and they are varied, open-ended and high quality. This gives children the opportunity to select resources to support their chosen activity.

4. Learning and Development

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways. Our team plan for and resource challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development, for all children to access, regardless of their academic needs or abilities. Our team ensure the characteristics of effective learning are at the forefront when planning;

Playing and exploring – *Do they investigate things and 'have a go'?*

Active learning – *Do they concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements?*

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning, and room to develop their confidence in order that they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically - *Do they have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things?*

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Planning in the EYFS

"Babies and young children are experiencing and learning in the here and now, not storing up their questions until tomorrow or next week. It is in these moments of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest – the 'teachable moments' – that the skilful adult makes a difference. By using this cycle on a moment-by-moment basis, the adult will be always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child's thinking (assessment), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's well-being and learning (planning for the next moment)."

From National Strategies document Learning, Playing and Interacting P.22 - 23

We value the importance of child led learning and use an approach called "Planning in the Moment". This way of working is all about seizing the moment for children to progress in their learning, whilst following their own interests. Based on what the children are already deeply involved in, this way of planning relies on our skilled practitioners to use quality interactions to draw out the children's knowledge and build on it there and then (in the moment). We observe the children in their play and look out for 'teachable moments' (moments during play which provide an opportunity for a practitioner to teach the child) which we then act upon in order to ensure the children progress. Research has shown that high-level

This way of working means that most planning is retrospective (there is no forward planning). Each member of the Early Years team records what they have done each day to help the children with their learning. We then look at this at the end of the day to consider how we can further develop and extend this learning.

Assessment and Record Keeping

At St Peter's teachers use observations, discussions, and recorded work to assess children's achievement against the framework for the EYFS Foundation Stage. All Foundation Stage staff are fully trained to record their observations and to use Tapestry, an electronic learning journal, as evidence to support achievement against the profile points. This evidence is used to help teachers plan appropriate next steps for the children's learning journey.

KCC (Kent Local Authority) moderation of our assessment is undertaken regularly as is moderation in our local collaboration 'EduCant' in order to verify judgements made.

Induction

Young children entering formal education have many years ahead of them in school. It is therefore important to begin this process in a sensitive and caring manner. To settle into school with eagerness and enjoyment can develop the beginning of a love for learning. At St Peter's we carefully plan an induction process for our youngest children which includes home visits and members of school staff visiting the children at nursery, as well as a series of opportunities for parents and carers and their children to come and visit the school and find out more about life at St Peter's.

Transition into Year 1

When our children are moving on from the EYFS and preparing to become part of Key Stage One, we plan carefully to enable a smooth transition. Change can be really challenging for young children and we recognise the importance of ensuring that the provision in place allows children time and space to get used to all the 'new' things that they will encounter. As part of this transition process:

- Reception and Year 1 teacher meet to discuss individual needs of children in July
- Children visit their Year 1 classroom and teacher for transition sessions in July
- The 'Letters and Sounds' approach to phonics and spelling is continued throughout Year 1 and 2
- Child initiated learning is continued in the afternoons in Year 1
- There is an overlap in approach and routines, e.g. behaviour systems, timetables etc
- Where possible, the Year 1 children continue to enjoy practical learning experiences which gradually become more formalised