



St Peter's CoE Primary School

Early Years Policy



This policy was created in March 2015 by the EPA Early Years Partnership and adopted by the full governing body on ...

Signed: _____ (Headteacher)

Signed: _____ (Chair of Governors)

This policy is due for review in March 2017

Introduction

Within St Peter's Nursery Class we provide care and education for children from two to five years.

"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 a foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up." Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2012

Aims

At St Peter's we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child including children with additional needs.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Work in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

EYFS Principles

The EYFS principles which guide the work of all practitioners are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

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

Effective practice in the EYFS is built on these four guiding themes. They provide a context for the requirements and describe how practitioners should support the development, learning and care of young children. This policy outlines how we meet each of the four themes.

1. A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are

influenced by feedback from parents/carers and practitioners; we use appropriate levels of challenge, praise and encouragement and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

2. Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We use the Key Person approach to support the development of these positive relationships.

3. Enabling Environments

We recognise that the learning environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. We view the environment as an “extra teacher”, as resources and areas of learning are set out in such a way which encourages children to make independent and considered choices during their play.

4. Learning and Development

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. We aim to cater for all children by providing an inclusive setting.

Teaching and Learning

The Areas of Learning

Individual children’s progress will be at different rates and levels of achievement will vary. All children will follow a balanced curriculum that enables them to make progress towards the Learning Outcomes which are now divided into two areas.

Prime Areas

The prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. The prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout the EYFS. Prime areas are fundamental to development in all other areas.

Specific Areas

The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning. Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. These are divided up further into 17 learning Areas:

Prime Areas	
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Making relationships Self-confidence and self-awareness Managing feelings and behaviour
Physical Development	Moving and handling Health and self-care
Communication and Language	Listening and attention Understanding Speaking

Specific areas	
Literacy	Reading Writing
Mathematics	Numbers Shape, space and measure
Understanding the World	People and communities The world Technology
Expressive Arts and Design	Exploring and using media and materials Being imaginative

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We recognise that children learn effectively when they are able to play, explore and think creatively and critically. This belief underpins the teaching and learning experiences provided at St Peter's Nursery. The Characteristics of Effective Learning are:

Playing and exploring Engagement Finding out exploring Playing with what they know Being willing to 'have a go'
Active learning Motivation Being involved and concentrating Keeping trying Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
Creating and thinking critically Thinking Having their own ideas Making links Choosing ways to do things

Play

We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator, encouraging children to be creative and develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for the children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

We organise the day to provide a balance between the following:

Child initiated activities – children make choices from within the learning environment

Adult initiated activities – practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning

Adult Led activities – children engage in planned activities to meet specific learning outcomes

We recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustainable periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and we have an ethos of learning through play.

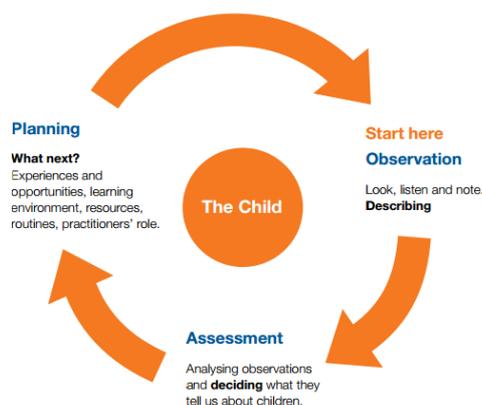
The Learning Environment

We strive to provide:

- A welcoming, stimulating and safe environment
- An environment that is appropriate for young children’s physical needs
- Use of indoor and outdoor learning environments
- Resources that are organised so that children can make choices and be independent learners
- Displays to reinforce the value of children’s work and celebrate achievements
- Good quality and variety of play experiences
- Designated areas that reflect all areas of the curriculum
- Areas that provide opportunities to promote good listening, sitting, speaking, turn taking and learning behaviours

Observation, Assessment and Planning

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of Early Years practice. We follow an observation, assessment and planning cycle, as shown here, all our staff who work in the Early Years are involved in this process:



Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of long, short and recorded observations. These observations are used to inform assessments. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment judgements are recorded on Target Tracker four times a year. A baseline assessment is carried out on entry into the reception year.

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning takes account of the children's current interests, development and learning needs.

The parents and guardians are given the opportunities to meet with the Foundation Stage Team regularly. Parents and guardians also receive a written report at the end of the year in relation to the children's progress, achievements and next steps.

Partnerships

At St Peter's we value the importance of working in partnerships with:

Parents – We recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents and recognise their role as the child's primary educator. We encourage regular sharing of information about the children with parents. We encourage parents to share their knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. interests, experiences, likes, dislikes).

Other professionals – we engage with a variety of other professionals as appropriate.

Partnership Schools – meet regular with the partnership schools to share good practice and take part in moderation activities.

Equal Opportunities

All our practitioners have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the EYFS setting. All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within our Nursery Class. *See Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.*

Monitoring and Review

There is a named governor for EYFS who will discuss practice with the Class Teacher. The Headteacher will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.