

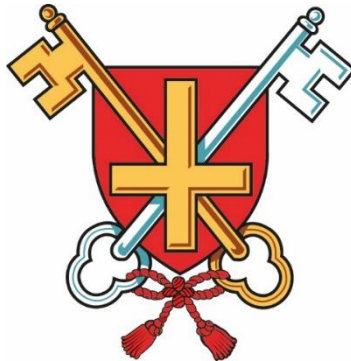
Bright Beginnings – Faith for the Future

“Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble”

1 Peter 3:8

St Peter's London Docks

Church of England Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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", 2024

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At St. Peter's London Docks CE Primary School, we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development and as preparation for life. The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the reception year.

All children begin St. Peter's with a variety of experiences and learning and have already learnt a great deal. It is the essential that the practitioners working in nursery and reception build upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through ensuring that parents/carers, support staff and the Early Years practitioners work together effectively to support children's learning and development. This is achieved by the sharing of information with preschools and parents/carers and ensuring that each child's learning is a continuous journey.

2. Aims

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being.

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

1. A Unique Child - every child is unique child who is constantly learning from birth. They can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. The commitments are focused around development; inclusion; safety; and health and well-being.
2. Positive Relationships - how children learn to be strong and independent from a base of positive, loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person. The commitments are focused around respect; partnership with parents; supporting learning; and the role of the key person.
3. Enabling Environments – states that the environment, with teaching and support from adults plays a key role in extending every child's development and learning through planning, observations and assessments. Adults and key workers respond to the children's individual needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children will also benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.

4. Learning and Development- recognises that all children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, and that all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

3. Safeguarding

All staff members must ensure that all the children are safe and well cared for when in our school. In addition, they all must also report any concerns about child's wellbeing when any information is disclosed to them or through their own observation. Any concern is to be reported to the designated person (head teacher, in her absence deputy/assistant head).

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 future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond
- provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development
- 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/guardians and value their contributions
- ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development
- provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive

4. Learning and Development

The Early learning goals (the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should acquire by the end of the reception year) and the educational programmes (the matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught to young children) are set out in the "Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage" document.

There seven areas of learning and development:

Prime

- Communication & Language and Literacy (C&L)
- Physical Development (PD)
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Specific

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World (UW)
- Expressive arts and design (EAD)

At St. Peter's we believe these seven areas are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

5. Planning

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 do.

Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS will be put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning. All practitioners who work in the Foundation Stage at St. Peter's are involved in this process.

There are three stages of planning the curriculum:

Long Term Planning

We have created a framework, which gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. Topics are planned for each of the six half terms on a two-yearly cycle and the early learning goals and educational programmes are distributed over the terms, to give a broad and balanced coverage.

Medium Term Planning

We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each half term. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities, and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified.

Short Term Planning

We identify specific learning objectives, activities, differentiation, deployment of adults and resources, to meet the learning needs of the children on a weekly and day-to-day basis. It allows for flexibility in response to individual children's needs and interests and for revision and modification, informed by on-going observational assessment.

6. Key person

The Statutory framework of EYFS requires each child to have a key person to ensure that each child's learning and care are tailored according to their needs and engage with parents/carers in guiding their development at home. At St. Peter's we understand that the person best suited and qualified for this role is the class teacher who holds the responsibility for planning, monitoring and assessment. Other members of staff also make sure that each child's needs are met and build good relationships with the child and his/her parents/carers.

7. Staffing and Organisation

St. Peter's is a one form entry school with Nursery and Reception where the classes are led and managed by a qualified teacher.

The teacher liaises with the teaching assistants, regularly involving them in planning, preparation and assessment. We are always aiming to improve our teaching skills, knowledge and understanding and so all practitioners are encouraged to participate in developing themselves professionally.

We also meet on weekly basis for phase meetings that either provide further professional development or we carry out our work as a team, discussing children's progress and next steps.

8. Assessment, recording and monitoring

At St. Peter's we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and

review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations recorded on class assessment sheets, assessment on entry, other focused assessments e.g. sound/number, annotated examples of work, photographs, and information from parents. Each child has an individual "Special work book" (also called Wow book) with examples of their work and observations. This records the child's learning journey and development.

Summative assessment

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. The EYFS Profile compiled at the end of the reception year then summarises all of the formative assessment undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements against seventeen scales. It indicates whether children are meeting the expected level of development, or not yet reached the expected level ("emerging").

All practitioners in the Foundation Stage contribute to the profile and the Early Years co-ordinator attends EYFS training regularly.

Children are also tracked using the school tracking system which enables staff to set and monitor targets for each child's learning.

The foundation stage leader monitors teaching and learning across the foundation stage each year and analyses EYFS Profile data in conjunction with the Head Teacher.

9. Learning through play

"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others."

("Early Years Foundation Stage", 2014)

At St. Peter's we support children's learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves and through sustained shared thinking.

10. The Learning Environment

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence. Activities are planned for both the inside and outside. The learning environment is divided into a variety of different areas, including:

Role play, book corner, writing area, maths area, creative area, sand, water, construction, small world and messy/sensory play. These areas are carefully arranged to encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the learning environment.

Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

11. Transition procedures

11.1 Transition to Nursery

Prospective parents can visit the school at any time and the school organises visits prior to a new year. A new parents meeting is held in June to introduce the school's expectations and routines, and to outline the induction process and Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents/guardians have the opportunity to meet the class teacher and to visit the classroom.

Parents/guardians are given a Nursery document which outlines the curriculum and school routines, and a time is allocated for a home visit. The parents also have an opportunity to sign up for a drop-in session in July so that their child would be familiar with the setting and practitioners. During the start of the Autumn term the class teacher and support staff will carry out a home visit to share key information and plan an individual settling procedure.

Settling in

We appreciate that every child develops differently and that children enter our Nursery with different experiences, therefore we have no "rules" when it comes to settling in. All is tailored according to child's needs and discussed during the home visit. Some children are ready to start full time without their parent's/carer's while others settle in by staying initially for a short period of time with their parent/carer.

11.2 Transition to Reception

Transfer records from pre-school settings inform Reception practitioners about the new intake. A new parents meeting is held in June to introduce the school's expectations and routines, and to outline the induction process and Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents/guardians have the opportunity to meet the class teacher and to visit the classroom.

Children, that are new to the school, will have a home visit in July to ensure they are familiar with the teacher and can start building relationships.

All children also have the opportunity to come to a visit the Reception at least one morning during the summer term.

Wherever possible, particularly in cases of special educational needs, the school will liaise with the previous setting.

In addition,

- Nursery children meet the Reception staff during whole school activities and when playing outside or inside when the Nursery/Reception door opens for free flow
- Children have lessons in their new classroom during the summer term
- Nursery and Reception teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July

11.3 Reception to Year 1 Transition

Reception and Year 1 teachers have worked together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

- Reception practitioners plan for some more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer term, encouraging less dependence on adult support

- an EYFS Profile end of year class summary sheet and assessment records as well as characteristics of learning are passed on to year 1 teachers
- reception and year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July
- reception children visit their new year 1 class and teacher in July and undertake some lessons there. Where possible, these are carried out by the Y1 teacher
- during autumn and spring terms elements of the EYFS are maintained for continuity and valuing the importance of a practical, play based curriculum.
- In Year 1 Children are given choice in the activities they access in the Autumn Term. There are plenty of hands-on tasks, practical activities and the use of the outdoor learning area.

12. Early Years Ready – including Toilet Training and Buggies/Prams

At St Peter's, we encourage children to be 'Early Years Ready' before they start in Nursery or Reception class.

For those children who are developing within normal parameters socially, emotionally and physically, EYFS ready means:

Toilet Training

- children are expected to be toilet trained on entering the school Nursery or Reception
- if a child is not yet toilet trained, the school would expect parents to tell staff, EYFS lead or SENCO before entering Nursery or Reception (whether or not the child has Special Educational Needs)
- the school understands that children of all ages, but particularly in Nursery and Reception are likely to have accidents (especially urine accidents), and ensures children are treated sensitively and without blame in such circumstances
- children should arrive at school wearing underwear - unless agreed with the school that they require nappies/pull-ups
- children are supported in changing themselves, and the school has a small stock of spare clothes for this purpose

Buggies and Strollers

- children are encouraged to walk, scoot or ride to school on bikes and that they are not pushed in a buggy/stroller
- where possible, children should be encouraged to walk further distances or use public transport/other methods of transport to improve independence, gross motor skills and stamina

Dressed and Prepared

- children have suitable underwear and clothing that easily allows them to use the toilet independently
- that all items of clothing (including shoes) are labelled clearly with their name
- children wear weather appropriate clothing (e.g. layers to allow for cold or hot weather, waterproof shoes if raining, hats/gloves/scarves for cold weather, sunhats for hot weather etc.)
- children wear closed toe, easy to put on, shoes give support and are suitable for running, jumping and climbing
- spare sets of clothes are brought to school in a bag in case of accidents or messy play

Eating and Feeding

- children are able to use cutlery and an open cup at meal and snack times

13. Home/School Links

We recognise that parents/guardians are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents/guardians and practitioners work together in Early Years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We aim to develop this by:

- outlining the Nursery /Reception curriculum to parents/guardians during the new parents meeting in July, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home
- sending home letters, informing parents/guardians of the learning that will be taking place at school.
- holding several parent/carer evenings a year to discuss progress and to provide an opportunity for asking questions and sharing information
- operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents/guardians can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner
- inviting parents/guardians to help in our school and to accompany children on school visits
- encouraging parents/guardians to listen to their child read each night and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary
- Taking part in weekly reading mornings
- providing an annual written report to parents/guardians in July summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals and their characteristics of learning.

14. First language

At St. Peter's we value child's first language and we strongly encourage the parents to use their home language when speaking to their child either at home or at school. At the same time, we make sure that each child has lots of opportunities to acquire good level of English.

15. Equal Opportunities

At St. Peter's we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

For further information, see Equal Opportunities Policy/Gender Equality Policy/Disability Equality Policy and Racial Equality Policy.

16. Inclusion

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Additional adult support may be provided for children with special medical needs, thus increasing the adult/pupil ratio.

Individual Education Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. Foundation Stage teachers discuss these targets with the child (where relevant) and his/her parents/guardians. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term.

The school's SEN co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary. For further information, see Special Educational Needs Policy.

17. Links with other policies

Attendance policy;
Child Protection and Safeguarding policy;
Safer care of conduct policy;

18. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed and updated by the Leadership team every three years or in response to DfE updates/Local Authority changes/highlighted school development areas.