

# Lanchester All Saints' Catholic Primary School



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### **Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement**

All Saints' Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

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## Our School Policy for Early Years Foundation Stage

(see also our policies on Curriculum; Inclusion and Intimate Care)

- ❖ We have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils that develops their knowledge, creativity, curiosity and skills-base. Utilising our location within North-West Durham, we deliver a curriculum that draws upon our rich history, cultural heritage and local resources.
- ❖ Our school life holds Gospel Values at its centre – this is evident within our curriculum delivery; we prioritise themes of fairness, integrity, compassion and responsibility and have high standards of all pupils in all subjects.
- ❖ Our curriculum is taught sequentially and systematically across each year group and assessments are used to inform current knowledge and future planning. Depending upon the individual needs of different cohorts or groups of pupils, the curriculum is adapted to ensure all children can access it and progress within it. Regardless of year group or subject, individual learning as well as collaborative learning is supported as part of a positive, hardworking ethos.
- ❖ Prior learning is built upon with links made between old and new concepts. Meaningful learning is embedded throughout educational visits and creative activity and opportunity.
- ❖ When the children leave our school, we expect them to be confident learners who have a sound understanding of their place within our local community, our wider location and our global family. As a school, we are proud that our curriculum follows national policy but is also flexible and responsive to current issues.
- ❖ Our intention is for our pupils to be inspired to pursue knowledge and celebrate diversity in all areas.

The early years foundation stage (EYFS) sets standards for the learning, development and care of your child from birth to five years old. Entry into All Saints' Primary School is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are five (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday).

The Early Years Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. It is the Early Learning Goals that set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been learning in one of the various educational settings that exist in our community. The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment.

### Aims

The aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage in All Saints' school is to:

- facilitate the development of the children in the seven areas of learning: Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Physical Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, and Expressive Arts and Design;
- nurture and develop the child's spiritual knowledge and development in line with the teaching and ethos of this Catholic School;
- provide a structured and well planned curriculum based on the diverse needs, interests and abilities of the children, taking into account special educational needs and allowing all children to reach their potential;
- provide children with a sense of achievement through learning, develop confidence and a positive self image;
- to provide a good first contact with school for parents and carers, fostering a positive partnership and joint commitment to the child's learning and welfare;
- to give children the opportunity and space to explore, enjoy and experiment with a wide range of activities and experiences in order to develop as individuals and as group members.

### **Teaching and Learning Style**

A broad and varied curriculum is offered throughout the classroom and outdoors on a continuous basis. This continuous provision provides a stimulating environment offering the children the time and freedom to create and develop their own learning. The classroom is divided into different areas of learning which link to the curriculum. The way in which each classroom area contributes to the curriculum is detailed in the Long Term Plan. Teaching takes place throughout the day as a whole class on the carpet for short spaces of time and in small groups led by an adult.

In planning and guiding children's activities, as practitioners we reflect on the different ways that children learn. 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

The more general features of quality practise in our school that relate to the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents/carers that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- The range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play talk or other means of communication;
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- The support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilitates and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- The identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents and carers;
- The good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- The clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- The regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## **Play**

Childhood is a time of play. Play is hugely valuable since it is through play that we discover the excitement of learning, the skills of co-operation, the importance of language, the rewards of achievement; in short we acquire important life skills. Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They also express fears, or re-live anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations.

## **Inclusion**

We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

In our Reception classroom we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children so that most will achieve expected scores on the Foundation Stage Profile by the end of the year. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children from different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experiences and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources that reflect diversity and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress, and providing support where necessary.

## **The Curriculum**

The curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing the children's:

### **Personal, social and emotional well-being**

We promote an inclusive ethos and provide opportunities for each child to become a valued member of the class and school community so that they develop a strong and positive self image.

### **Attitudes and dispositions towards their learning**

We provide an atmosphere that develops an enthusiasm for learning and confidence in their ability to be successful learners.

### **Social skills**

Through group play and problem solving, the children learn how to cooperate, work harmoniously and listen carefully with and to each other.

### **Concentration, attention skills and persistence**

Throughout the year the children are taught and encouraged to develop their capacity to concentrate on their own or group tasks.

### **Language and communication skills**

Through role play, small world play, puppets, storytelling, group play both indoors and out, and Show and Tell times, children practise and extend their communication skills and widen the range of their vocabulary.

### **Physical development**

A combination of informal play in the outdoor area and formal PE lessons provide opportunities for each child to develop gross motor skills and increase their understanding of how their bodies work. Fine motor skills are promoted throughout the continuous provision.

### **Reading and Writing**

In an atmosphere rich in text in many different contexts, the children explore, enjoy and learn to use words. At All Saints' Primary School we follow the Letters and Sounds teaching document and teach letters through a fun playful approach.

### **Mathematics**

Indoors and outdoors, the children have a broad range of opportunities to develop these key mathematical skills. The exploration of ideas in situations that are meaningful to them which enable the children to develop their mathematical understanding.

### **Understanding of the World**

A challenging and stimulating classroom environment provides the children with many opportunities to explore new things, solve problems, make decisions, experiment, predict, plan and question the world in which they live.

### **Expressive arts and design**

Children are encouraged to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas through a variety of art, design and technology, movement, dance and imaginative role play activities.

### **Spiritual development**

Through Bible stories, prayer, discussion and reflection the children are encouraged to develop their spiritual intelligence. The ethos of the classroom and wider school promotes a free, full and informed response to the love of God.

### **Planning**

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. Throughout the day children will take part in short planned whole class sessions and group activities. We also encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities that are on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. For each half term the planning is planned through different topics. The topics are chosen through observations of the children's interests. Group activities and independent activities are usually linked to engage the children.

### **Assessment and Recording**

Assessment with the Foundation Stage takes place in many different ways:

- Developmental statements are completed in the first few weeks of term, during the spring term and finally at the end of the summer term. A picture of the child's development, known as The Foundation Stage Profile (FSP), is filled in June and the data sent to the government via the Local Education Authority. We share the information contained in the Foundation Stage Profile at our parental consultation meetings. The child's next teacher also uses the information to make plans for the year ahead.
- Daily observations are made by all Reception class staff of the children during child initiated activities and are recorded in their Learning Journals. These are used to assess where a child is working within their goals, and this knowledge is then used to plan the next steps for the child. The Learning Journals are shared with parents/carers at parental consultation meetings.
- During each adult led activity, assessments are made of the child's progress in specific areas. This information then feeds into the staff's planning for next steps.

- Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. These reports are completed in June and sent to parents in early July.

## **Resources**

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to choose their own activities from the resources that are put out each day.

## **The Role of Parents & Carers**

We believe that all parents and carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents and carers have played and their future role, in education their children. We do this through:

- School visit: Children have the opportunity to visit the setting and meet their teacher and new friends before starting school;
- Welcome meeting: All parents are invited to a welcome meeting the term before their child starts school;
- Nursery visits: All children are visited by the Reception Teacher either in their nursery setting;
- Open door policy: Staff are available to talk to before and after school each day. We encourage parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- We offer a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carer;
- We provide various activities that involve parents and carers, i.e. regular communication with home through the child's school reading record/sounds book, and inviting parents and carers to curriculum evening, in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking;
- Formal meets: Parents have the opportunity in the Autumn Term and Spring Term to discuss the children's progress in private with the teacher. Parents and carers receive a report in their child's attainment and progress in the summer term.

## **Monitoring and Review**

This policy was implemented November 2018. It will be reviewed annually or earlier if necessary.  
Last review: September 2019