

St John's Upper Holloway CE Primary School



EYFS policy

September 2024

St Johns Upper Holloway C of E Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date: September 2024

Review: September 2025



Our Vision

Jesus said: 'Love each other as I have loved you'. John 15:12

As we are loved, so we shall love.

As we are taught, so we shall teach.

As we are nurtured, so we shall flourish.

Our Mission

St John's is a small, caring Church of England Primary School. It is committed to supporting our pupils to be happy, successful and fulfilled throughout their lives. We believe that everyone is unique and valued by God. We aspire to be a high achieving school that provides an outstanding education:

- ❖ promoting the highest standards of teaching and learning, with excellent leadership
- ❖ being inclusive, celebrating diversity and valuing all religions, faiths, cultures and backgrounds
- ❖ providing a rich and stimulating curriculum that will inspire and challenge
- ❖ being a happy, healthy and safe place
- ❖ providing excellent care, guidance and support with a strong partnership between school, parents and the community.

We seek to promote six Christian values of creativity, thankfulness, truthfulness, friendship, perseverance and courage, each linked by our core value of love. We believe these help to prepare our children for a successful and fulfilling life, so being:

- ❖ considerate and respectful with excellent manners
- ❖ confident, happy, independent and self-motivated
- ❖ co-operative and collaborative
- ❖ honest and trustworthy
- ❖ resilient, hardworking and determined
- ❖ highly principled with moral, spiritual, cultural and social awareness, including shared British Values.

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1. Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage extends from birth to the end of the reception year. Entry into our nursery class is at the beginning of the autumn term when children are aged 3 and where spaces are available at the beginning of the spring and summer terms. We offer eight full time equivalent places for 2 year olds who meet the eligibility criteria. First entry into our primary school is at the beginning of the autumn term when children are aged four (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday). We value parents' knowledge of their children and where possible we will support a parent's wish to defer their child's start to Reception.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is important in its own right and is also fundamental 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 Foundation Stage (although we recognise the importance of children's individual developmental milestones).

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, can do and their interests;
- ❑ 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 across all curriculum areas both indoors and outdoors;
- ❑ it provides a rich and stimulating environment.

2. Aims of the Foundation Stage

The curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by promoting the following areas of learning:

Prime areas:

- ❑ communication and language
- ❑ personal, social and emotional development
- ❑ physical development
- ❑ Specific areas:
 - ❑ Literacy
 - ❑ Mathematics
 - ❑ Understanding the world
 - ❑ Expressive arts and design
- ❑ In the Early years we discretely teach and encourage children to develop positive learning behaviours. The characteristics of effective learning in the early years curriculum come within the following sub headings: play and exploration, active learning and creating and thinking critically.

3. The role of parents

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

- ❑ talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- ❑ having a school readiness crèche during the second half of Summer term for children who may need additional support with transition into nursery
- ❑ visits by the teacher and key person to all children in their home setting prior to their starting nursery (or Reception class for children who have not been in Nursery).
- ❑ a meeting in school in July for parents and children to go through important information about the school including the school day, curriculum and practical aspects such as uniform and reading. It's also an opportunity for children to meet the teaching team and become familiar with the classroom setting.
- ❑ a "settling in" review meeting for nursery parents at the end of the first half term;
- ❑ offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our nursery and reception class;
- ❑ encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- ❑ having flexible admission arrangements, and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;

- ❑ arranging for children to start nursery/reception over a staggered period at the start of the term, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school;
- ❑ encouraging parents to stay if their child is finding settling into school challenging;
- ❑ offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- ❑ providing various activities that involve parents, e.g. inviting parents to curriculum events, meetings and inviting them to join in on their child's planning and assessment procedures, in order to discuss and gain understanding of the kind of work that the children are undertaking.
- ❑ posting welcome videos on the online platform Seesaw to support the settling process

There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the parents discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a verbal report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school term.

4. Planning

The Foundation Stage curriculum

Our curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage is organised into the Prime areas of learning and the specific areas. The Prime areas of learning; communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development are the fundamental to children's future success in their education and are the most significant focus in the Early Years. The specific areas of learning include literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design. These areas are also crucial to children's development in the early years and our children's learning experiences across all these areas enable them to develop competency and skills of a well planned holistic curriculum.

Birth to Five Matters and the Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning and assessment throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teachers use the assessment of children to support their planning for next steps for individual children. Our medium-term planning is completed termly, and identifies the opportunities for learning through well thought out structured environment and resources, with outcomes for children in line with Development Matters, Birth to Five Matters and the statutory Early Learning Goals.

Long Term Planning

- Within the Early Years we use the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE) scheme to plan through stories which fall into an overarching theme. These themes run throughout a term and are on a two year theme rotation.

Medium Term Planning

- Medium term plans include key objectives for each curriculum area and each term.

- Learning opportunities are planned around high quality CLPE core texts that reflect the diversity of our community.

Short Term Planning

Weekly plans set out the differentiated learning objectives, which practitioner will deliver the activity and whether the activity will be delivered in the classroom or the garden. Each activity is either accompanied by an observation proforma which details what the initial observation, an outline of the teaching, the learning objectives and what the outcome of the teacher input. Child initiated learning is recorded on curriculum learning boards.

5. Teaching and learning style

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 express fears, or re-live anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations.

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.

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

- ❑ the partnership between teachers and parents that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- ❑ providing a play based learning environment where children have the independence to develop characteristics of effective learning.
- ❑ 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 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, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;

- ❑ the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- ❑ 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 and relevant qualifications for all adults working at the Foundation Stage.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning across all 7 areas. We use materials, equipment and various outside locations and resources (visits, outside specialists and family members of the children) that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities and resources on offer, as we believe that this encourages meaningful and independent learning.

6. Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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 (see our policy on inclusion).

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations linked to the needs of our children, so that children can achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of 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, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- ❑ using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs;
- ❑ encourage autonomy in a well-resourced environment which children can easily access independently;
- ❑ 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 (such as speech therapy) as necessary.

7. Assessment

We make regular assessments of children's learning (between five and eight focus children a week), and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage takes the form of observations, annotated photographs and children's early mark-making, and this involves the teacher and other adults (parents and outside agencies where needed or possible), as appropriate. The work is collated in Profile Books which are individual to each child and shared between home and school on a regular basis. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. At the end of the EYFS we summarise children's progress against the 17 early learning goals and assess whether children have met, exceeded or are below (emerging) the expected level. Children who meet the expected early learning goal for the Prime areas of learning and literacy and mathematics are considered to have made a 'good level of development' (GLD). The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

In Nursery children are assessed against Development Matters as above and next steps are planned in accordance with curriculum guidance.

We undertake termly summative assessments towards the end of each term where we correlate and analyse the assessment data for individual pupils and the whole class. During the autumn term we also undertake a baseline assessment and this enables us to track progress throughout the year. We share the information contained at our parental consultation meetings. Baselines for two year olds are based upon information from parents, child initiated observations and tracking observations. These then form the basis of the two year old progress check.

Through the information that is provided by means of observation the teacher updates the final assessment on target tracker at the end of the final term in reception and we send a summary of these assessments to the LEA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead, especially the transition term in Year One. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings.

All staff who use the Early Years foundation stage profile, including the Year One teacher and support staff working in Reception, must be trained by the Borough in how to assess against the Foundation Stage Profile.

The Early Years teacher and Early Years Co-ordinator attend termly cluster meetings to moderate teacher assessment against the Early Learning Goals.

Parents receive reports that offer clear identification of children's characteristics of effective learning, achievements and brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in early July each year.

8. Transition

There are a number of ways in which we help children with the transition from Nursery class to Reception and Year 1. These include:

- ❑ transition meetings between teachers towards the end of Summer term
- ❑ transition workshop held in the summer term by Reception and Year 1 class teachers with the parents of the children transferring from Reception to Year 1.
- ❑ "meet the teacher" sessions to get to know their new teacher and classroom
- ❑ home visits to enable teachers to find out important information about each child and their family
- ❑ incorporating aspects of good early years practice in the first half term of Year 1, including the use of some aspects of the EYFS assessment and resources.

9. Safeguarding in the EYFS

As an early years provider delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the school aims to meet the specific safeguarding and child protection duties set out in the Childcare Act 2006 and related statutory guidance.

The school will ensure that children taught in nursery and reception classes are able to learn and develop and are kept safe and healthy so that they are ready for school by providing a safe, secure learning environment that safeguards and promotes their welfare, and takes appropriate action where there are child protection concerns.

The Use of Mobile Phones.

Early years settings within the school will follow the child protection procedures set out in this policy. In addition, the school has the following child protection policies:

- parents and carers are asked to switch off mobile phones if they are coming into the early years setting and leave the setting if they need to use their mobile
- parents are prohibited from taking any photographs of children in the early years setting. The only exception would be in the event of a class assembly
- staff seek parental permission to take photographs of the children, which must be linked to teaching the curriculum and that they use school equipment only for this purpose
- staff must use mobile phones during breaks in the staff room and not whilst children are present unless in an emergency situation
- School cameras should be used for all recording/photographing purposes both in and out of school. These images should only be printed out at school and staff should not under any circumstances take photos or images of children home.

- The use of personal mobile phones and camera by staff to take photos of children both in and out of school is not permitted.

Children going missing

In line with our safeguarding and attendance policies, we actively follow up instances of children not attending school where we have not been informed of the reason for absence by the parents or carers.

Children knowing how to keep themselves safe

All children are taught how to reflect and make choices that will keep themselves and those around them, safe. They discuss and agree class rules at the start of the year which take into account “being safe”. All children also identify two people who they can go to if they are worried about something.

10. Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the governing body, and will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary.

Signed _____ (head teacher) _____ (date)

Signed _____ (chair of C&S committee) _____ (date)