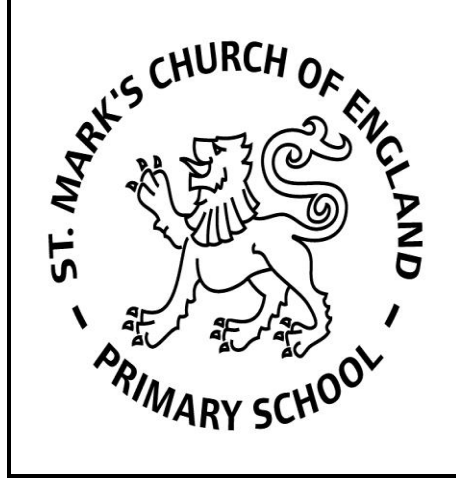
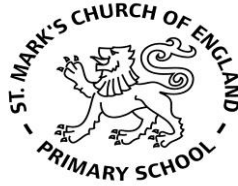


# **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**



**"Every Child,  
Every Chance,  
Every Day"**



**Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day**

## **St Marks CE Primary School** **Policy for EYFS**

### **What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, the EYFS applies to children attending our two-year-olds provision, our Nursery from the age of three years, to the end of the Reception year when they are five years of age.

### **Our Aims**

We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation (2014)* which clearly states:

**‘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.’**

Our Early Years Foundation Stage aims to:

- Create a happy, caring, secure and stimulating environment for all children;
- Encourage confidence, independence and a desire to learn;
- Focus on the development of every child as an individual, valuing and building on their previous experiences and responding to their individual needs;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Develop in children an enquiring mind, an interest in learning and an enthusiasm for the next stage of school life;
- Provide good foundations for later learning;
- Encourage good social relationships, developing self-esteem and respect for others.

## **The Four EYFS Principles**

The statutory framework is based on four guiding principles which shape practice in early years settings. These are:

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

### **A Unique Child**

At St Mark's we aim to work in close partnership with parents/carers, in order to provide an environment that is happy, loving, warm, stimulating and safe. Our children will be stimulated and nurtured to become competent, confident, independent and co-operative learners. We value all children's cultural inheritance, diversity of language and beliefs and foster the development of the whole child; socially, emotionally, creatively, physically, academically and spiritually in an environment that is safe, calm and challenging.

Parental involvement is crucial in enabling us to reach our aims and is encouraged both in and outside the early years environment.

### **Positive Relationships**

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### **Parents as Partners**

Parents and carers are our children's first and foremost enduring educators and we are committed to working in close partnership with them in order to enable each child to achieve their potential. Young children are eager learners and all adults have an important role in sustaining that eagerness. We highly value the contribution that parents and carers make and seek to maintain an effective partnership between home and school by:

- Demonstrating that we value and respect the role of the parents/carers as the first educators by listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns and aspirations they have;
- Ensuring that parents and carers are provided with detailed information prior to admissions, enabling them to feel confident about the transition process;
- Visiting all EYFS children in their home setting prior to them starting , to allow practitioners and parents to discuss their children's circumstances, interests, skills and needs and for children to meet their teacher/key person;
- Inviting all EYFS parents to an induction meeting during the term before or after their child starts nursery or school;
- Children having an opportunity to spend time with their new key person or teachers during 'Moving Up Days';

- Demonstrating that we value linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning;
- Welcoming parents and carers into the classroom to share their expertise and enrich the learning opportunities provided;
- Ensuring parents and carers are kept well informed about the curriculum and school life via parent's notice boards, letters, communication book, leaflets and school website;
- Providing opportunities for parents to add comments and observations relating to their child's achievements;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents/carers, e.g. sports day, trips, themed activity days, etc.;
- Other partnerships including coffee mornings, Parents and carers groups, Come Dine With Me Lunch sessions, Come Learn With Me sessions, Healthy Eating classes etc.;

We also Share information regarding a child's progress and achievements and how parents and carers can support the next stage of learning through workshops, formal meetings, leaflets and reports.

### **Enabling Environments**

The EYFS learning environments, both inside and out, are carefully organised into learning areas, where children are enabled to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Children are supported to explore and learn securely and safely and are helped to develop across all seven areas of learning.

Each EYFS class has access to an outdoor space, which has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active.

### **Learning Through Purposeful Play**

Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors, provides key opportunities for young children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. We recognise the importance of adult support and a secure environment in ensuring effective high quality, purposeful play.

Effective high quality play opportunities involve:

- Planning and resourcing a challenging environment;
- Supporting children's learning through purposefully planned play activities;
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play;
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play.

### **The secure environment and adult support in play enables children to:**

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences which help them to make sense of the world;
- Practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
- Be alone, be alongside others or cooperate as they talk or rehearse their feelings;
- Take reasonable risks, making and learning from mistakes;
- Think creatively and imaginatively;
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.

#### **Active learning**

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning. Children are given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning. 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 setting to extend their learning.

#### **Learning and Development**

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected. 'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.

Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. **Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.'** (1.8 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014)

#### **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

**'In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.'** (1.9 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014)

The 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; and
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

#### **The Early Years Curriculum**

The level of progress children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure progression and continuity of skills in seven areas of learning. **'Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas.'**

The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. **It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the**

**three prime areas.’ (1.6 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014)** These areas of learning depend on each other to support a rounded approach to early years' development. All the areas will be delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

**There are three prime areas:**

**Communication and Language Development (*listening and attention; understanding and speaking*)** involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations. The development and use of communication and language is at the heart of young children's learning and opportunities will be provided for children to use their skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes, and be supported in developing the confidence and disposition to do so.

**Physical Development (*moving and handling; health and self-care*)** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food. St Mark's is a healthy eating school and opportunities to support children's understanding of being healthy, is a high priority. Young children's physical development is inseparable from all other aspects of development because they learn through being active and interactive. They use all of their senses to learn about the world around them and make connections between new information and what they already know.

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development (*self-confidence and self-awareness; managing feelings and behaviour; making relationships*)** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities. To support children's emotional well-being, helping them get to know themselves and what they can do, is a high priority, particularly in the first term at school.

**There are also four specific areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:**

**Literacy (*reading and writing*)** involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. We will endeavour to promote a love of reading and writing through providing an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

**Mathematics (*numbers; shape, space and measures*)** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures. Experiencing concepts in a practical context and linking experiences to everyday life is crucial in the early stages of development. The children will be provided with opportunities to practice and extend their skills in these areas and to gain confidence and competence in their use.

**Understanding the World (people and communities; the world; technology)** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community by providing them with opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. In this area of learning, children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding which help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in science, history, geography and information and communication technology.

**Expressive Arts and Design (exploring and using media and materials; being imaginative)** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities: in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding.

**The statutory early learning goals outline the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. By the end of the EYFS, some children will have exceeded these goals. Other children, depending on their individual needs, will be working towards some or all of the goals – particularly some younger children, some children with learning difficulties and disabilities and some who are learning English as an additional language.**

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage at St Mark's C of E Primary School**

### **Planning**

Long and medium term planning are based around half-termly, yet flexible themes. Planning incorporates a balance between adult and child initiated activities, and experiences which take account of children's individual needs, stages of development and interests. Planning incorporates all areas of learning and development and puts the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage into practice. **'Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.'** (1.6 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014)

Planning always follows the same pattern: observation, analysis and using information about the children to plan for the next steps in their learning. Through careful planning we aim to:

- Provide a carefully structured curriculum, building on and extending children's knowledge, experiences, interests, stages of development and skills;
- Provide a wide range of well planned, purposeful, challenging activities that utilise the children's interests, needs and previous knowledge;
- Support and develop children's involvement and concentration in order for them to learn effectively;
- Present activities in many ways and use a range of teaching strategies;
- Develop self-esteem and confidence in their ability to learn;

- Provide a safe and secure learning environment, where each child is valued and where racial, religious and gender stereotypes are challenged;
- Monitor children's progress, identifying areas of concern/next steps and taking action to provide support;
- Give opportunities for self-assessment and reflection.

### **Assessment and Recording**

On-going assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process.

**'It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. In their interactions with children, practitioners should respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share.'** (2.1 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014)

We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded onto the children's learning journey portfolio and are often supported by information provided by parents, carers and other professionals.

Staff ensure that they:

- Make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles;
- Use these observations and assessments to identify learning priorities, next steps, interests and to plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child;
- Match their observations to the expectations of the Development Matters and Early Learning Goals;
- Assessment does not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children.

We use the **Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals** to assess the children in the Foundation Stage. In each learning area, the Development Matters and Early Learning Goals define the expectations for most children. Practitioners plot the individual progress of each child as they grow and develop. As the child progresses through the EYFS, staff will make judgements based upon their observations of the child in all seven areas of learning.

During the Reception year, the children are assessed against the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. This is also informed by the observations, assessments, discussions with parents/carers and other professionals and each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 scales derived from the Early Learning Goals.

During the year, there are formal opportunities to feedback information to parents and carers through parent/carers consultations in the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms. Parents and carers are vital partners in the assessment process. Towards the end of the academic year, a written report, covering the seven areas of learning, will be given to parents and carers indicating whether children are meeting **expected** levels of development; if they are **exceeding** expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels (**'emerging'**).



## Reception to Year 1 Transition

**‘As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.’ (1.8 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014)**

Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings, throughout the Reception year. Children are introduced to challenges through a variety of carefully planned activities in different learning areas and are supported to meet challenges daily. Children participate in adult-led activities every day and structured phonics, reading, writing and mathematics sessions are part of the daily timetable. Reception practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer terms, encouraging less dependence on adult support.

## Welfare Arrangements

**‘Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.’ (3.1 statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)**

At St Mark’s, we recognise our responsibility for promoting the welfare of our youngest children:

- All adults with access to our children will receive the appropriate level of CRB checking and as part of the induction process, will have discussed and signed a school code of conduct;
- All staff employed by St Mark’s, receive a thorough induction training to help them understand their roles, responsibilities and key information about how things work in the Federation;
- All staff employed by St Mark’s, will undertake regular Child Protection training and are expected to follow the school guidance in following up a cause for concern;
- Staffing will be organised to ensure the safety of the children and to ensure staff/child ratios are always followed;

All staff will be trained to the level appropriate to their responsibility;

- Paediatric First aid will only be administered by trained personnel. Procedures are in place to inform parents/carers of accidents involving their child;
- Procedures are in place to ensure security of children and the safe release of children into the care of individuals named by the parent/carer;
- As a healthy school, there is a focus on emotional well-being, healthy eating and physical activity. Good health will be promoted and appropriate action will be taken when children are ill;
- Routines are in place to support children’s growing understanding of personal hygiene;
- Children’s behaviour is managed effectively through the use of a whole school behaviour system, which is adapted to the stage and development of individual needs;
- Risk assessments will be undertaken and reviewed regularly;
- Indoor and outdoor premises, furniture and equipment will be regularly checked and repaired, washed etc. as required;
- Records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting will be maintained;
- Policy documents will be available for parents and carers.

Reviewed and ratified by Governing body	Autumn Term 2016		
Next Revision (Please highlight as appropriate)	Annual	<b>Biennial</b>	Tri-annual
To be reviewed	Autumn Term 2018		