ST SWITHUN'S
Church of England VC Primary School

EYFS Policy

Issue 4

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Mrs M Whitehead	February 2012	February 2015
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Our Vision at St Swithun's

'Building foundations for the future'

Matthew 7:24-27

St Swithun's C of E VC Primary School
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are in our Nursery and Reception class.

Aim

At St Swithun's C of E VC Primary we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value each child individually and work in partnership with parents and carers to meet their needs in order to help every child to reach their full potential.

The EYFS statutory framework 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.'

We are guided by the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and follow the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;
- children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Curriculum Intent

As part of our EYFS practice we will:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context.
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult as well as independent learning.
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out.

Curriculum Implementation

Our curriculum maps out a long term plan of topics for the school year. These topics are often then adapted and changed to suit the interests and ideas of the children. We endeavour to plan exciting and challenging learning opportunities based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve or indeed exceed the early learning goals. We begin each new topic with a 'WOW' day to gain the interest and excitement of the children, we will often also end our topics with a 'WOW' end to review and celebrate all the learning that has taken place.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

Communication and Language
Physical Development
Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

Literacy
Mathematics
Understanding the World
Expressive Arts and Design

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

In Nursery we 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. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

The children will be taught through a variety of ways, children will have whole class group sessions, small group times, one to one activities with an adult and they will also be supported in their play by the adults in the EYFS team. Children will have a daily phonics session using 'Jolly Phonics' and 'SoundsWrite', they will also have teaching inputs and activities based on mathematics and literacy, including shared reading and writing.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS:

> 'Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.'

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. Most children enjoy engaging in imaginative play that relates to, and makes sense of the world that they live in. For lots of children this imaginative play contains a strong element of weapon and Super Hero re-enactment. Re-enacting weapon use is a universal language of play for children and usually results in high levels of engagement for the children actively involved in it. Images and ideas gleaned from the media are common starting points in play and may involve characters with special powers or weapons. Adults can find this type of play particularly challenging and have a natural instinct to stop it. We feel this is not necessary as long as we as practitioners are there to help the children to understand and respect the rights of other children and to take responsibility for the resources and environment.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, encouraging them to manage their hygiene and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Curriculum Impact

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways, using the iPad, photo observations, collections of work or through assessment during adult led activities. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place regarding the progress being made. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in the children's own personal learning journey. In the autumn and spring term, parents are invited to attend a parents evening and reports are written and sent home at the end of each term. At the end of the summer term in Reception all children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals, stating whether or not they are emerging, expected or exceeding in each area. We celebrate the learning journey that children have made during their time in EYFS by holding a special graduation ceremony assembly.