

ALL SAINTS C. of E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Early Years Policy

Early childhood is the optimum learning period during which children begin to make sense of their world. At All Saints' Primary School we firmly believe that it is not only a preparation for the next stage of education, but is valid in its own right.

We have developed a specific Early Years curriculum. The style of working in the Autumn Term builds on what the children will have been doing in nursery or playgroup. A separate and distinct curriculum organised for those children who join us on a part-time basis after Christmas and after Easter.

The Foundation Stage curriculum is divided into six areas of learning:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication, language and literacy
- Mathematical development
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Creative development

These are the areas set out in the D.F.E.S. curriculum guidance for the foundation stage that the school implements with regard to the specific needs of the children who attend All Saints School.

By the Summer Term the style has become more like the way the children will be taught the following year in Year 1. This gradual transition allows for a feeling of continuity for the children and also reflects how they grow and develop during this most important year.

By the end of this reception year and in line with our overall school aims, we aim for an Early Years All Saints' child to have received a 'memorable, quality education' and be:

- confident and secure in their surroundings
- be happy, polite and proud to be at All Saints' C. of E. Primary School
- actively involved and interested in their work
- developing a high level of independence
- familiar with school routines and expectations
- developing confidence to speak up, ask for help and think freely for themselves
- able to listen carefully
- secure in early basic life skills such as dressing, table manners
- attempting emergent writing confidently
- developing a good sight vocabulary
- confident in the knowledge of letter sounds
- able to use a pencil purposefully and form the majority of their letters correctly
- competent in number skills
- thirsty for knowledge having an enquiring mind
- aware of their own body's physical potential
- developing consideration for others
- able to make use of a wide range of resources, including ICT, to support their learning

- used to learning in a variety of ways, being accustomed to a variety of approaches and teaching styles
- actively involved in many aspects of wider school life

How Do Young Children Learn Best?

We recognise that children develop at very different rates and their learning must be well matched to their developmental stage.

Early Years children at All Saints learn about themselves and the world about them through concrete first hand experiences based on carefully structured play activities and the purposeful use of language as a tool for thinking about, exploring and expressing ideas. Activities can stem from the children's own interests and children are actively involved in their own learning.

Play is very much a young child's work. Through our structured play activities children can practice and consolidate their learning.

They can learn:

- to take risks and solve problems.
- to initiate, participate, interact and reflect.
- to be active learners
- to explore ways of using their bodies
- to experiment with and use equipment and materials
- to set and tackle their own problems
- to be involved and indeed absorbed in their learning and be developing good concentration

To achieve this through their play the children need:

- to have time to practice and refine skills
- to have time to be observant - to learn from others around them

The children will thus be '**PLAYING**' and '**TALKING**' and '**DOING**' - they need to make connections between one experience and others and they need opportunities to talk about their experiences and ask questions

The provision and use of resources, and classroom procedures are carefully planned and organized so children feel physically and emotionally comfortable within their surroundings. Adults interact positively with the children and children are encouraged to be independent having their own views, ideas and feelings greatly respected. They learn to use a wide range of resources skilfully through purposeful activities that build on previous experience.

We have reviewed and revised our Early Years Curriculum in the light of the creation of The Foundation Stage. We use the Foundation Stage Profile to monitor the children's achievements.

We believe children learn best if there are clear learning objectives for each session and careful observations are made with appropriate teacher/adult intervention. This enables effective assessment and monitoring to take place that then informs the planning process to ensure continuity and progression in the children's work.

Much of the first term will be use to accustom children to school routine and to develop good habits. These include:

- using the toilet/cloakroom
- lining up at the end of playtime and in the classroom
- table etiquette at lunchtime
- getting out and putting away resources safely and tidily, including setting up a painting table/easel. (If you use something you must put it away)
- using the class areas and equipment properly
- changing for P.E independently
- answering the register and giving in any monies or letters
- managing any `break`
- home/school reading records
- managing personal pencil cases if they wish
- social skills training - how we treat each other and how we behave in school
- appropriate noise level within the classroom

Our expectation is that by the end of their first term our Early Years/Reception children will be settled, feel secure and demonstrate a good level of independence and initiative in the above areas.

Induction of New Children

New children to All Saints are made to feel as welcome as possible through these key initiatives:

- All children are invited to attend a series of induction afternoon sessions. The aim of these sessions is to familiarize the children with their new physical environment, the class teacher and their new classmates. The first session for children and their parents lasts about an hour and includes activities in the classroom. The second session lasts for an entire afternoon and the children usually are happy to stay without their parents.

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Home/School Liaison

We liaise closely with our feeder playgroup and other local pre-school providers. This liaison comprises visits from us to them and vice-versa as well as occasional meetings within school of all interested staff. Reports from the children's pre-school providers are greatly valued by our Early Years staff and may be sent direct from the nursery/playgroup or may come via the parents.

Children attending Stepping Stones Pre-school visit us for a number of events throughout the school year.

Parents Consultation

A termly parents consultation evening is arranged and parents and the teacher discuss aspects of the child's progress relating to the six areas of learning that form the Foundation Stage.

The Learning Environment and Resources

The children learn to use a wide range of quality resources skilfully within the classroom base and immediate outdoor environment. Space is organised in well defined areas where materials and equipment are clearly labelled and accessible to the children.

The following activities tend to be whole class sessions

P.E
Singing
'News' (telling/writing)
Video
Circle time (PSHE/speaking and listening)
Storytime
Quiet reading time
Handwriting
Musical composition/listening

Other activities are structured around the classrooms with Key 'Workshop Areas' eg. language, construction, home area, role play, art/technology, sand, water, maths, science, computer music, cognitive toys and puzzles. These areas are clearly labelled, with words and pictures, appropriate resources and children have access. There is enough space for the children to move around and there is space for children to be quiet and have 'time out'.

The bottom playground is considered our 'outdoor classroom'. The activities outside mirror those that take place indoors and are supervised where possible. We have a growing number of wheeled toys and other resources for physical development.

These activities are either individual, pairs or small groups

- Food technology
- Information technology
- Sand/water/role play
- Use of listening corner
- Science
- Technology
- Mathematics
- Construction
- History/Geography
- Spelling/Phonics
- Mounting work

Staff are very much aware that our very young children will tire easily and are developmentally at a different stage than older Reception age children.

Assessment and Recording

The emphasis is on what the child can do and is interested in, in all areas of the curriculum and in a range of contexts.

Assessment is conducted through skilled, purposeful observation and intervention. We need to find out about children as individuals. We monitor progress and use our observations to inform future planning.

Observations are made to enable staff to evaluate the provision they are making and to provide a focus for communication with others. Such assessment data then informs our planning to ensure continuity and progression in the child's work.

Assessment builds upon the children's life experiences, cultural and linguistic background. It involves parents/carers by including their comments and examples of work. It provides continuity between home and school by facilitating a dialogue between all those involved with the child.

The teacher's short term planning highlights clear learning objectives provides the foundation for further assessment.

Reviewed September 05