



**St. Mary
Magdalene**
C of E Primary School

Love to learn, learn to love

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday.

At St Mary Magdalene Church of England Primary School, Children can join our Nursery from the term after their third birthday for part time (15 hours) or full time (30 hours) provision. Children begin full time school in the September after their fourth birthday.

We believe that a child's earliest years are crucial and that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides a secure foundation for all future learning and development. 'If we get the early years right, we pave the way for a lifetime of achievement.'

We adhere to the Statutory Framework and 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.**

As a Church of England school, Our Christian values, referred to as Our Loving Four: honesty, respect, responsibility, and aspiration, underpin the aims of our broad and balanced curriculum in the Early Years.

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy; Behaviour Policy; Safeguarding Policy and Intimate care Policy.

Aim

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Provide the highest quality care and education for all our children underpinned by Christian values.
- Support every child to reach their full potential and give all children a strong foundation for their future learning.
- Recognise and value the uniqueness of each child and work alongside parents and others to meet their individual needs.
- Create a safe, happy, and stimulating environment that is tailored to our children's needs.
- To offer motivating and enjoyable learning experiences, which develop the characteristics of effective learning and enable each child to become confident and independent learners.
- To instill in children a love for learning linking to our school motto 'Love to learn, learn to love'.

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Build positive relationships and work in partnership with parents; valuing families and family life, and use this to ensure children are happy, secure and transition smoothly.
- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, which is flexible, values the interests and development of our children and uses play as the vehicle for learning.
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Provide timely and purposeful early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- 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.

Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum 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 and exceed the early learning goals.

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

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

The **prime** areas are as follows:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

These areas are the basis of our curriculum. Communication and language is a particular focus and through careful planning, modelling and assessments we ensure there is a big focus on building a language rich environment.

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 children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication, and physical development.

Teaching and Learning in the Early Years.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the framework which 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 plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by adults.

Some activities are planned in advance driven by a specific learning outcome as a result of observation and assessment. Whereas other activities may be completely led by the child providing valuable information about the different ways in which children learn and enabling us to reflect these in our practice.

The Role of the Adult

During children's child-initiated play, Early years practitioners teach through high quality interaction. It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- Develop communication skills and to constantly model and introduce new language.
- To provide a narrative for what children are doing so that children can begin to use language of thinking independently.
- To show children how to use resources in the classroom environment.
- To explain and demonstrate new skills to encourage the children to practise and develop these skills for themselves.
- To respond sensitively to each child's ideas and to offer ideas for how they could be explored further.
- To question, both to ascertain a child's level of understanding and to promote thinking skills.
- To facilitate and to set challenges so that children are moving forward and making progress against their next steps.
- To promote the characteristics of effective learning by referring and celebrating how children have used the learning gems.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

At St Mary Magdalene we support children in using the three characteristics of effective learning (CoEL). These are;

- **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They have the

opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

- **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements. 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.
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults 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 classroom to extend their learning.

The CoEL have inspired our own set of learning behaviours that we believe matter most to our EYFS children at St Mary Magdalene and help our children to be successful learners. These are referred to as our 'Learning Gems'

They consist of:

- **Solve my own problem**
- **Talk about my learning**
- **Work with others and on my own**
- **Keep trying even when it's tricky**

We encourage all children to develop and demonstrate these through their work and play. They are a set of behaviours for the children to aspire towards and activities within our EYFS curriculum are designed to encourage the children's development towards competency and confidence in these. These are constantly referred to in class provision so the children can develop the understanding of how we learn.

Observation and Assessment

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. Everyone is encouraged to contribute, and discussions take place. Parental contributions are sent giving the parents the opportunities to share learning which is taking place at home and to gather a wider picture of the children in our setting. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with parents. Parents are invited to attend parents evenings and reports are written at the end of the year. Throughout the year workshops and events are hosted to encourage parental involvement.

Parents are asked to contribute to the children's Learning Journey with WOW moments from home and comments on progress three times a year.

At St Mary Magdalene we use 'Tiny Tracker' to record judgments against the EYFS profile. These assessments are carried out throughout the year and help us to identify gaps in learning and next steps.

Within the final term, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress in the 7 areas of learning. We use this assessment to report the 'GLD' at the end of their reception year.

Enabling Environments

At St Mary Magdalene, we recognise that the environment, alongside staff, plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure, and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision purposely chosen to offer breadth and opportunities to apply their developing skills.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and follows children's interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff.

A Unique Child

At St Mary Magdalene CE Primary School, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others, we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at St Mary Magdalene are treated fairly: regardless of race, religion, or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school, and it is the responsibility of everyone to live out our Christian values. In our school we believe children matter. We believe in being aspirational and give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

Assessments consider contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the schools SENCo is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEN.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience, and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.

- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from 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 taking action to provide support as necessary.

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. We have stringent policies, procedures, and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

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

Staff in both Nursery and Reception have completed a Level 2 Basic food hygiene certificate. This is taken into consideration when preparing and storing food in the classrooms.

At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate will be always on the premises and available when children are present and will accompany children on outings.

Mobile Phones

Due to the significant advances in mobile phone technology, there is the potential for both mobile phones and cameras to be used inappropriately. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children in the setting, and to prevent inappropriate use St Mary Magdalene prohibits the use of personal mobile phones by staff when working with children. This is in line with the staff code of conduct. Personal belongings are kept out of the way or in designated lockers.

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety and Safeguarding.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules, and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy).

At St Mary Magdalene CE Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Toileting

Read in conjunction with other school policies, including staff code of conduct and toileting.

All children at St Mary Magdalene, have the right to be safe and be treated with dignity, respect and privacy at all times so as to enable them to access all aspects of the school day. This policy supports the safeguarding and welfare requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021 and the Equality act 2010

We ensure that:

No child's physical, mental or sensory impairment will have an adverse effect on their ability to take part in day-to-day activities.

- No child with a named condition that affects personal development will be discriminated against
- No child who is delayed in achieving continence will be refused admission
- No child will be sent home or have to wait for their parents/carer due to incontinence
- Adjustments will be made for any child who has delayed incontinence

We work in partnership with parents/carers to provide care appropriate to the needs of the individual child and together with the SENCo will produce a care plan.

The care plan will set out :

- What care is required
- Number of staff needed to carry out the task (if more than one person is required , reason will be documented)
- Additional equipment required
- Child's preferred means of communication (e.g. visual, verbal). Agree terminology for parts of the body and bodily functions
- Child's level of ability i.e. what tasks they are able to do by themselves

- acknowledge and respect for any cultural or religious sensitivities related to aspects of intimate care
- Be regularly monitored and reviewed in accordance with the child's development

Parents/Carers are asked to supply the following (delete as appropriate):-

- Spare nappies
- Wipes, creams, nappy sacks etc
- Spare Clothes
- Spare underwear

When intimate care is given, the member of staff explains fully each task that is carried out, and the reason for it. Staff encourage children to do as much for themselves as they can, lots of praise and encouragement will be given to the child when they achieve.

Urine, faeces, blood and vomit will be cleaned up immediately and disposed of safely. When dealing with body fluids, staff wear protective clothing (disposal plastic gloves and aprons) wash themselves thoroughly afterward. Soiled children's clothing will be bagged to go home – staff will not rinse it. Children will be kept away from the affected area until the incident has been completely dealt with.

All staff maintain high standards of personal hygiene, and will take all practicable steps to prevent and control the spread of infection.

Positive Relationships

At St Mary Magdalene CE Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We 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;
- offering a home visit for any children who are new to our setting.
- offering an opportunity for both parents and their children to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transition sessions;
- offering support for each child through the transition from pre-school to Reception with the children building up to a full timetable over two weeks. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children.
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading and phonics;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents three times a year at which the teacher

and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;

- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and play sessions, celebration assemblies, school visits, and workshops.
- providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by sharing "wow" moments with staff which inform planning and provision;
- Written contact through home school reading record as well as the acknowledgement that parents can ring school to contact EY staff or email the class email address.
- Children's targets are shared with parents through target stickers, allowing parents to continue with these at home.
- Both nursery and reception have a variety of homework to support parents to help their children.

We have good links with other EYFS providers in our area. The reception teacher meets with staff to discuss new intake.

Transitions

An action plan is put in place to ensure a smooth and happy transition between year groups.

Transitions are carefully planned for, and time is given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders. Children attend introductory sessions to reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. Parents receive an all about me questionnaire to pass on important information and interests of their children.

Where necessary individual plans for transition are made working alongside parents and or previous settings.

In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive, and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.