



## EYFS Policy – All Saints C of E Primary School

### Introduction

The Foundation Stage at All Saints comprises of one Reception class and a mixed part-time / full-time Pre-School, with 30 places. The Foundation Stage at All Saints C of E Primary is an integral part of the continuous education of the children. It embraces the aims of the school and is intended to provide a firm foundation for future education.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers birth to 5 years of age. We believe that children in the early years need a distinct curriculum, different to that of KS1, which is appropriate to their development stage. It is essential that young children have access to a curriculum that not only meets their intellectual needs, but also supports their emotional, social and physical development. The curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage includes 7 areas for learning and development; these are:

#### The Prime Areas

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

#### The Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

For children in the early years at All Saints, much of this education takes place through play-based experiences.

### Principles of Foundation Stage Learning

We believe that the following principles compliment the ones outlined in the curriculum guidance for the EYFS and are equally valid:

- Early childhood in itself is valid and is not simply a preparation for the next stage of education.
- A broad range of experiences is important in developing young children's basic abilities.
- The whole child is important – social, physical, emotional and intellectual development is all interrelated.
- How we encourage children to learn is as important as, and inseparable from, what they learn.
- First-hand experience is essential for the enhancement of children's learning.
- Autonomy and self-discipline should be encouraged. Intrinsic motivation is valuable as it results in child-initiated learning.
- Play is vitally important.

### The Environment

The environment must be appropriately planned to allow learning to take place and should:

- Be well organised, inviting and aesthetically pleasing
- Be safe and secure and contain a range of objects that are familiar to the child
- Be flexible

- Arouse the child's curiosity and be challenging
- Be well and appropriately resourced
- Provide materials and resources, options and choices that facilitate on-going play
- Have space for the children to move about and explore
- Have easy access to an outdoor area for all areas of the curriculum
- Value children's achievements and promote a positive self-concept e.g. through displays of the children's work and circle time
- Acknowledge and value the children's social, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Have a suitable ratio of staff to children

## **The Curriculum**

Our planning:

- Reflects the children's interests
- Is flexible to allow for child-directed experimental learning
- Reflects the age and interests of the children but also promotes new experiences and understanding
- Is designed to provide children with the skills they will need to adequately cope with future learning
- Consists of a continuous cycle involving, observing, assessing, planning recording and returning to planning
- Exploits the educational potential of play and talk

## **Play**

Research over decades has shown that children need to play: play is their work. It is through play that children understand and try to make sense of the world around them. Learning through play enables them to learn in a non-threatening way. Play can raise standards of achievement through the quality of provision, the quality of the role of the adults and the value they put upon play. Play provides the most effective starting point to learning.

## **Talk as a Means of Promoting and Furthering Learning**

Research has consistently pointed to the importance of talk in children's learning, both at home and at school. A variety of factors can foster effective talk:

- Easy access to adults who will stimulate and encourage dialogue
- The opportunity for children to play together, especially in pairs or small groups. This can promote conversation and raise the level of complexity of the children's talk.
- Small, enclosed spaces encourage talk better than large open spaces e.g. dens
- Adults who encourage children to initiate questions, offer views, ideas and observations and who 'think aloud' elicit children's thoughtful participation more than those who control the conversation or who do not intervene at all
- A variety of shared experiences in different contexts can provide rich opportunities for talk
- Children's existing language skills, both in English and other languages, are valued and supported

## **The Role Of Adults**

Practitioners work together recognising the need to build relationships of trust with children and to value their ideas and feelings. Practitioners interact in a meaningful way, allowing time and opportunity for children to talk, listen, and make sense of their experiences. The planning of children's experiences is based on observation and assessment of interests, abilities and needs. High expectations of all children are held. Practitioners collaborate with other involved in children's learning and development: parents, carers, those involved in previous or subsequent supervision, health workers, social workers etc.

## **Settling Your Child at Pre-School- Advice for Parents**

Initially, when you or your child's carer is settling your child they will need to spend time with them in the Pre-School. We welcome parents, childminders or a relative who is regularly involved in the child's care to help in this important process. If your child has never been to an early years setting (nursery, playgroup or toddler group) they may find it distressing when you leave them and need the reassurance that you will return and take them home. Your child needs to see you have a good relationship with the staff and are comfortable with the Pre-School environment. This will help them settle and begin to engage in Pre-School activities.

Staff will show you the toilets and sinks so that the child can be helped to use them. They will then feel confident to use them when you leave.

Every child is different and we will discuss with you how long to leave your child and when. We ask you to always tell your child when you are leaving and to reassure them you will come back.

Before the child's first day, we offer induction sessions for parents and their children. Alternatively you can always make an appointment to visit with your child at another time that is suitable for you both.

## **Pre-School Attendance**

It is very important that Pre-School children attend regularly and consistently. Early education provides considerable benefits for the development and wellbeing of young children, as is confirmed by widespread national and international research. It is also the most expensive provision of any age group in the school. When a Pre-School child is not attending regularly, continuity of care and education suffer, and it becomes difficult for staff to ensure that the child is truly benefitting from their place. Parents generally recognise this, and Pre-School places at All Saints are very popular.

Children are admitted to All Saints Pre-School on the condition that they attend every day that they are scheduled to, unless there are important reasons for absence (as for the rest of the school). Pre-School attendance will be monitored by staff and reported to governors. If absence is unavoidable, notice and reasons must be given.

Where a Pre-School child's daily attendance is inconsistent without good reason, or the child is absent for a period of time without notice or explanation, parents should be aware that their child's place may be withdrawn in order to enable another child to benefit from it.

## **Pre-School Liaison and Transition from Pre-School to Reception**

We hold open days with activities for children and parents to be involved in so that parents can introduce themselves to staff and see the learning environment. The open days also provide a welcome to parents and an opportunity to complete necessary paperwork. Every effort is made to ensure the transition between home to school and from Pre-School to Reception is a pleasant and comfortable arrangement for all concerned. Parents are welcome to stay to settle their children at school.

Pre-School children visit Reception with their parent the term before they are due to start. Throughout the year, Pre-School and Reception have joint experiences, such as Forest School, to enable the children to interact with each other and for Pre-School children to become familiar with the Reception environment and staff.

## **Working With Parents**

We strive to make equal partnerships between practitioners and parents in which there is a mutual respect. We recognise that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators. We are also very aware that children are more likely to succeed and have fewer behavioural problems when the school and home communicate well together.

The following school/ home links are already well established in the Early Years:

- Parents' handbook, sent to all Pre-School parents.
- An open day held at school for parents to meet and socialise with school staff and other new parents.
- Open days and workshops, provide opportunities for parents to see their children in situ and talk to the staff.
- Parents' evenings in Reception provide occasions for parents and staff to discuss children's progress and see the children's learning environment.
- Regular informal discussion between parents and staff at the end of each day.
- Staff work hard at building and maintaining relationships, and one positive way of doing this is to tell one parent a day what his or her child has done that day.
- Where there is concern about a child, there are always regular planned discussions between parents and staff.
- Early Years classes pages on the website showing a selection of activities and events.
- Class Dojo as a means of regular communication.

## **Assessment, Record Keeping and Reporting**

- Assessment of children begins before admission to school when parents are encouraged to discuss information about their child so we can effectively plan for their needs and next steps.
- In both the Pre-School and Reception, children are assessed continually through planned and informal observations made by teachers and support staff. Assessments and observations are used to understand learning patterns and individuals interest, and to plan for the next steps of learning.
- Open days are held regularly and a written report is sent to parents at the end of Pre-School and also at the end of Reception.
- At the end of the Foundation Stage, profiles are completed and passed on to the Year 1 teacher.
- A tracking system is used to monitor progress and this is fed into pupil progress meetings and the EYFS action plan.

## **Special Needs and Equal Opportunities**

We aim to ensure that all children have equal access to all activities. Some children who join the Pre-School or Reception may need additional support to access the Early Years curriculum.

If there are concerns about a child's development in any area, the teacher will discuss these with the child's parents/carers and with the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCO). This may result in informal strategies being put in place to help the child or in further assessment and support being provided. In some cases, there may also be a need to get expert advice from other support services; parental consent will always be sought before this happens.

## **Review**

This policy reflects the current situation regarding EYFS education at All Saints. It will be reviewed as new initiatives are introduced by the EYFS phase group or to reflect any further changes at national level.