

Early Years Policy



Policy updated by Mr Grogan (Headteacher) and Mrs Davies (Early Years Leader): June 2022

Policy approved by Governors: July 2022



Chair of Governors



Headteacher

Policy shared with staff and shared on the school website: July 2022

'Never settle for less than your best'

EARLY YEARS POLICY

Our school motto

Never settle for less than your best.

Our Vision

Following in the footsteps of Jesus, each member of our community will flourish as resilient, respectful and adaptable individuals prepared for life's journey. Along the way we will encourage and inspire each other to continue growing as beacons of light in our own lives and the wider world.

Our Mission

St George's Central seeks to provide quality education rooted in the Christian faith, serving the spiritual, moral and educational needs of the community of which it is part.

Introduction

This policy outlines the ethos, intent, implementation and impact of the Early Years Foundation Stage at St George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery and at our Early Years setting at Lancaster Avenue. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all practitioners working in both our EYFS settings. Early childhood is an 'explosion of experience' and every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundations for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

Curriculum Intent

In both our EYFS settings we aim to provide an engaging and meaningful curriculum that focuses on children learning through first hand experiences and exciting activities. We aspire to create an inclusive learning environment that is rich in 'The Curiosity Approach' which the children will find stimulating and motivating. We aim to support each child by:

- Recognising that all children are unique, special and their wellbeing is paramount;
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children are happy, engaged and know they are valued by practitioners;
- Nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within our community;
- Encouraging children to become independent and collaborative learners;
- Developing the children's understanding of our Christian school values and following our school vision;
- Supporting children to be respectful towards others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions which differ from their own;
- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge in order to challenge, stimulate and develop their resilience;
- Ensuring children flourish and become adaptable individuals prepared for life's journey.

Curriculum Implementation

Teaching in both EYFS settings at St Georges Central CE Primary School and Nursery is delivered in accordance with the government document 'The Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage.' (2021)

The curriculum is centred on three prime areas and four specific areas of learning:

Prime Areas

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

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Specific Areas

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

Through this EYFS curriculum the children also continually have opportunities to develop their characteristics of effective learning which are:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

We believe that children need rich opportunities to initiate ideas and activities so that they develop these learning characteristics that will then support life-long learning.

‘Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood for it alone is the free expression of what is in a child’s soul.’
(Friedrich Froebel)

All the areas of learning are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated active play based experiences which take place in a range of learning environments. The practitioners in both our settings are experienced at interacting with children and using these moments to question and scaffold the children’s learning to develop their thinking skills.

The practitioners at both settings adhere to the ethos of this Ofsted statement in defining teaching:

‘Teaching should not be taken to imply a ‘top down’ or formal way of working. It is a broad term which covers the many different ways in which adults help young children to learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child initiated play and activities: communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges. It takes account of the equipment they provide and attention to the physical environment as well as the structures and routines of the day that establish expectations. Integral to teaching is how practitioners assess what children know, dispositions to learning (characteristics of effective learning), and use this information to plan children’s next steps in learning and monitor their progress.’

The EYFS is based upon the following four principles:

- A unique child - developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals;
- Positive relationships - supporting the children in becoming strong and independent;
- Enabling environments - where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child;
- Learning and Development - an acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

Assessment and Progression

Planning is responsive to individual pupil progress. Regular formative assessments, based on observations, photographs and examples of work, inform every day planning as well as providing next steps for each pupil. All ‘planning in the moment’ opportunities are seized by practitioners to support immediate development. An online app is used to gather evidence by home and school for each child’s profile. All progress is continually monitored and assessed using the EYFS profile and the Early Learning Goals.

Parents/Carers as Partners

We feel that it is essential to establish positive relationships with parents/carers. We understand that an effective partnership between our school/EYFS settings and home will have a positive impact on children’s learning and development.

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We value the role of parents/carers as the children's primary educators and build our relationship with them through:

- Induction meetings
- Welcome sessions
- Home visits
- The ASQ questionnaires
- 'Wow moments' and 'I am a Star' sheets
- Informal chats at the beginning and end of each day
- Valuing their contributions to their child's online learning journey.

Parents/carers are regularly invited into school during the year for:

- Stay and play sessions
- Class worship
- Performances
- Workshops
- Supporting with trips and visits
- Reading to the children.

Three times a year parents/carers are invited to a more formal parents' evening where practitioners give feedback on their child's progress. Parents/carers are always welcomed into our school and EYFS settings and encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have at any point during the year.

Impact

The children in our EYFS settings will be inspired and motivated to actively participate in the curriculum and make good progress. They will experience enjoyment in their learning and transition into key stage one with the confidence and character to meet the further challenges they will face. As children leave our EYFS settings they will be:

- Curious
- Self-regulating
- Independent
- Excellent communicators
- Empathetic
- Creative thinkers
- Problem solvers
- Confident
- Resilient.

The children will then be ready to flourish as learners becoming beacons of light in their own lives and in the wider world.

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