EYFS Policy

Approved by:	Sarah Luff	
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St Michael's C of E Primary School Early Years Policy

All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage", Department for Education, 2024

At St Michael's C of E Primary School, we are committed to providing a high quality early years' education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

Staffing and Organisation

At St Michael's C of E Primary School, we have a Reception unit that has the use of two large classrooms and an outdoor area. The classrooms have a carpet area and the rest of the space is organised into learning zones for the children to access independently. There are currently two teachers, supported by 2 teaching assistants. Staff are organised to support the children in a balance of adult led and child initiated experiences throughout the day. All sessions include free flow access to the outdoor area. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible in order to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in.

Planning

The Early Learning Goals are the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the age of five. There are three prime areas of learning:

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

In addition, there are four specific areas of learning:

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

Our planning has a sharp focus on the children's needs, their interests and their stages of development. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be delivered in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful play and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.

Medium Term Planning

At St Michael's C of E Primary School, we deliver a creative and responsive curriculum, which is based around a new topic each half term or term. A half termly overview shows the key knowledge and skills for each area of the curriculum and how the knowledge and skills are built upon over the year. Adjustments to the curriculum are made based on children's starting points and assessments throughout the year.

Short Term Planning

Short term planning shows the learning opportunities that will be available over the week as well as showing how the learning environment will be enhanced in response to prior observations and assessment of the children. In addition, key vocabulary is highlighted for both whole class, group and enhancements, ensuring all adults are modelling chosen vocabulary. Daily planning includes differentiated adult led experiences, and identified focus children, based on next steps in their learning.

Effective Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. There is a range of "continuous provision" available in the classroom that is designed to offer open-ended, practical learning opportunities. Children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and explore how resources can be adapted. Each week, the provision is enhanced with additional resources, based on prior observations and opportunities to build fluency in foundational knowledge and skills.

Adult led activities are practical in nature and based on first hand experiences wherever possible. The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. Focus children are identified in planning and will work with an adult on specific 'enhancements' that have been planned.

Observation and Assessment

At St Michaels Primary School, we use a range of strategies to gather information about the children's learning and development and use this information to ensure that our planning meets the needs of all learners. During child initiated activities, practitioners make observations of the children's learning. Notes about guided activities are also recorded.

During the first few weeks of the autumn term, the Reception teachers will use a baseline assessment to show the level children are working at as they enter Reception. This allows learning opportunities to be pitched appropriately and also provides a baseline of the children's attainment. Each term children are assessed in all areas of learning and these scores are analysed, with key actions identified, to ensure that all children are making good progress.

Children are also assessed for language and communication difficulties. These children are then put on an intensive programme to develop their communication skills.

In the Summer term, practitioners consider the 17 ELGS in the EYFS Profile to decide whether each child is working at the expected levels or have not yet met the levels. Judgements against the ELGs are based on ongoing observation; all relevant records; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

The results of the Profile are shared with parents and/or carers, and there are opportunities for them to meet their child's class teacher to discuss this information. At the end of the year, Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This helps to create a smooth transition and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1. The EYFS profile results are reported to the local authority, who monitor and moderate the judgements made.

Learning Environment

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. Resources are clearly labelled and organised into learning zones, enabling the children to access them with a high level of independence. Practitioners regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the areas and make adaptations as necessary, changing provision throughout the year to meet the current needs of the cohort.

Parent Partnerships

We value the contribution that our parents and carers make to their child's learning and take every opportunity to work in collaboration with them. Before the children start school there is a parent meeting enabling parents to find out about the EYFS. Each half term, we publish a newsletter to inform parents of what their child will be learning. On the school website, there is a half termly curriculum overview showing what will be covered that term. In the Autumn and Spring terms, we hold parents' consultations and in the Summer term, we send home detailed reports.

The children take reading books home to practice and can also choose a book each week from our lending library. Each year, short videos are emailed home to explain how reading, writing and maths is taught and ideas to help their child at home.

Community Links and the Wider World

Over the year, we arrange visits from members of the local community to support our topic work. We also arrange trips for children in the EYFS within the local community, for example visiting the boating lake. The children take part in an educational visits linked to their topic work. Non-fiction texts and artefacts are also used to introduce new concepts in real-life contexts. We aim to develop the children's awareness of other cultures through learning about British values, different countries and celebrations.

Behaviour Management

Please refer to the school's 'Behaviour Management' policy.

Safeguarding

Please refer to the school's 'Child Protection' policy.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference. We can support each child's needs by:

- removing or helping to overcome barriers where these already exist;
- being alert to the early signs of needs that could later lead to difficulties and responding quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as required;
- stretching and challenging all children.

Please refer to the school's 'SEN', 'gifted and talented' and 'racial equality' policies.

Premises and Security

All visitors to the school must report to the main office. The office staff are responsible for verifying the identity of any visitors before they enter school. Visitors are asked to sign in to the school visitor's log and are given a visitor sticker to wear. Staff are aware of their role in challenging anyone who is not recognised and asking for identification from anyone claiming to be from an outside agency.

The external doors of the classroom are closely monitored by staff when children are entering or leaving the setting, to ensure that they cannot leave unaccompanied. The register is used to check how many children are present. When moving from one area school to another, head counts are used to check that all children are present before leaving.

Arrival and Collection of Children

Children can enter school from 8:45 until the bell goes at 8:55. Each child is marked in on the day's register by the class teacher. Parents/carers use the external classroom doors when

collecting their child(ren) at the end of the school day. If a child needs to be collected during the school day, parents report to the school office.

Under no circumstances is a child allowed to leave with anyone other than those named on the child's registration form, unless the parent has given verbal or written permission. If there are queries regarding a child's collection, the class teacher will contact the child's parent/guardian to discuss the situation with them. If a child is not collected and the parent/guardian is uncontactable, the other names on the child's registration form will be called to collect the child.

Outings

Written parental permission to take the children into the local environment is sought upon admission to the school. Further permission is obtained for any other outings. Risk assessments are completed for each type of outing.

Complaints

Please refer to the school's 'Complaints' policy.

Information for Parents and Carers

We provide a pack for new parents and carers that includes information about our daily routines, the types of activities provided, staffing and food and drink. Text messages and emails are used to keep parents updated on news and events.

Transition from Pre-school to Reception

Teachers visit the pre-school providers of all children entering Reception in the summer term before the children start in September. They meet both practitioners and children . Children have a set of induction sessions in the summer term before they start school, to explore the classroom and meet their new peers and staff.

Transition from Reception to Year One

In the Summer term, we begin a programme of transition to support the children with their move to Year One. This involves visits to the Year One classroom, giving the children a taste of their new class and the opportunity to get to know their new teacher. There is a meeting for parents at the beginning of the new term to give more details on the Key Stage One curriculum. The first half term of Year One follows on from the principles of the EYFS, allowing the children to feel secure in their new environment. All children that have not achieved the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception year will continue to work from the Foundation Stage curriculum for the first term in Year One.

Food and Drink

Whole class snack time takes place each morning, with the children being supervised by a paediatric first aider. A range of healthy snacks are available, supplied by "The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme". Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

Information about the children's dietary needs is sought when they enter the setting through forms and parent meetings. A list of the children's dietary needs is available in the classroom and all practitioners have regard to this when putting out food and drink in the snack area or when leading a cooking or food tasting activity. The school dinner menus are displayed on the website so that parents and carers can support their children to choose their food.

Illnesses, Injuries and Medicine

Please refer to the school's 'Medical Conditions' policy.