



CROSCOMBE AND STOKE ST MICHAEL PRIMARY FEDERATION

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Croscombe is a Church of England Primary School and this policy has been written with reference to its Christian foundation.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full 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 foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Stoke St Michael children have the option to join ‘Little Roots’ Preschool (located on the school site) from two years old. In both of our schools, all children who have attained the age of four by the 31st of August join us, part time, at the beginning of the academic year (September). They progress to attending full time during the Autumn term.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

In our federation 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/ sharing 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 are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school; our ethos is that ‘every child matters’. We 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.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the individual needs of our children, promoting a holistic approach to all learning opportunities. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning engaging 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.

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 positive 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)

Welfare

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."

In our federation we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017 (3.4.17). We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare 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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

In our schools we recognise that children learn to be strong 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 and meeting with parents about their child before they apply/start at one of our Federated schools.
Giving the children the opportunity to spend time with their assigned adult (Little Roots preschool) or teacher before starting preschool or school. Stoke St Michael offer 'Stay and Play' sessions for two to four year olds 'Come and Join in' afternoons and 'Transfer' mornings for the preschool September starters;
Croscombe works closely with the local nurseries; arranging visits to meet the individual children within their pre-school/nursery setting and the class teacher spends time with the designated key worker in order that a seamless positive transition can be provisioned for each child. There is a comprehensive induction period whereby the children attend 'Little Acorn Stay and Play' sessions, school wide picnic and 'transfer/introduction' mornings to support a positive transition into school life.

At Stoke St Michael Little Roots Preschool and the Reception staff team staff work closely together linking and sharing to ensure a progressive and seamless EYFS curriculum throughout Foundation Stage One and Foundation Stage 2. Where children are received into the Reception class from other preschool venues strong links and communication are built to ensure a smooth transition.

- All parents are invited to an induction meeting and social during the term before their child starts school;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Reception classes and preschool.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher, the HLTA (at Stoke) and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a formal report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Share days, Class assemblies, Phonics and Maths mornings and Sports Day etc;
- Actively engaging parents to contribute to the online Tapestry learning Journals for their children. Termly 'Tapestry' meetings are held at Croscombe. The parents come in and celebrate their child's learning and development, across the EYFS curriculum, through exploration of their child's online journal.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. In our schools the teacher acts as 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Higher Level Teaching Assistant.

Enabling Environments

In our Federation we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning engaging and challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

We plan carefully around class or whole school themes, which the children themselves have chosen. We take care to ensure that the planning and use of resources enable the children to reach their full potential.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs, supporting our holistic ethos. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation and this involves collaborative practice between the class teachers and HLTA's in both schools; this supports a broad understanding of each individual child's needs and development in line with the EYFS framework. These observations are recorded in different formats; the Reception classes, across the Federation, use an online Tapestry journal. Little Roots preschool use 'learning journal' booklets until the year before a child starts Reception – at this point they move to an online Tapestry Journal, supporting a smooth transition in assessment monitoring. These journals also contain information provided by parents and other settings.

In our federation, we use 'Somerset Pathways' to aid and support the recording of judgements against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG's). Each child's observation and development (within tapestry and learning booklets) is assessed as either being emerging, developing or secure; – ongoing collaborative practice, between professionals and parents, supports these judgements.

Within the final term of the EYFS year, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the EYFS Profile and assessment scales (these are judged as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding the ELG's). We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher; however the parents will be aware of these growing judgements through informal discussion throughout the school year.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS area is organised clearly and interactively to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. All EYFS areas have access to an outdoor classroom area where sensory learning activities are replenished regularly. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 6 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

In our federation we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 2. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;

- The understanding that teachers, HLTA's, learning support assistants and preschool staff have of how children learn and develop, and how this affects their teaching;
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- The carefully planned curriculum and the In The Moment Planning that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS framework;
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities, opportunities and equipment;
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations and collaborative practice – all of which are shared with parents;
- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

Play

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.”

Through excellent quality provision for play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules and boundaries. 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

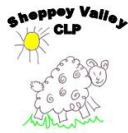
“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”

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 and solve problems independently. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can 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.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of Prime and Specific Areas of learning (7 in total):

Prime Areas

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

Specific Areas

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Monitoring and review

- It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher, HLTA's, learning support assistants and Little Roots preschool staff to follow the principles stated in this policy.
- There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.
- The Head teacher and subject co-ordinators will carry out monitoring on the EYFS provision, at the respective schools, as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Signed..... Headteacher

Signed..... Chair of Governors

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