



'Being the best we can be because with God all things are possible'.



This policy belongs to

St. Lawrence CE Primary School

Part of the Tibberton CE Primary School and St Lawrence Primary School Federation

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Revised: Autumn Term 2023

Consultation with Staff & Governors and adoption of policy: Autumn Term 2023

Review Date: Autumn Term 2024



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"Every child deserves the best possible start in life, and the support that enables them to reach that potential. Children develop quickly in the Early Years, and a child's experiences between birth and five have a major impact on their future life chances. A

secure, happy and safe 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."

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021.

Our Intent and Aims

Here at St. Lawrence CE Primary we aim to;

- give each child a happy, positive and enjoyable start to their school life within a safe and secure environment
- establish solid foundations and foster a deep love of learning
- enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually in order to thrive in a diverse and ever-changing world
- offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development
- offer a broad and rich curriculum
- encourage children to develop independence within a nurturing and supportive atmosphere
- support children to build relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing
- help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements by experiencing success and developing their confidence to work towards personal goals

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Implementation

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year.

Our Early

Years Foundation Stage incorporates pupils in their Reception year, the final year of the EYFS. Our Published Admission Number (PAN) is set at 13 and currently we have 11 children on roll in a Reception class.

The Curriculum

We recognise that every child is a unique child, constantly learning, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates and our themed curriculum supports and extends children's thinking. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebrating success, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning and to themselves.

The EYFS is based upon three characteristics of effective learning which practitioners must reflect upon and adjust their practice accordingly:

1. Playing and exploring – Children investigate and experience things and 'have a go.'
2. Active learning – Children concentrate and keep on going if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.



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3. Creating and thinking critically – Children develop and have their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

There are seven main areas of learning and development in the EYFS. All areas are important and interconnected.

The Three prime areas of learning are:

- Communication and language.
- Physical development.
- Personal, social and emotional development.

Additionally, there are Four specific areas of learning, in which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the world.
- Expressive arts and design.

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. 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 interconnected.

The Learning Environment

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by adult observation of the children and assessing their interests, development, and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. We plan overarching themes for the children half termly through adult-led and enhanced provision activities and our choice of books reflects the theme that is taught. The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. We encourage the children to become independent in choosing and using their own equipment and resources for play and in developing their own learning. There is a gradual build-up of autonomy which aims to help support children grow up and become more independent. The children have access to outdoor learning throughout the day and the outdoor environment is an extension of the classroom whereby children can access the different areas of learning.

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.

Play

"Observing children's play is the only accurate way for practitioners to assess development across all areas of learning and to gauge the right levels of interaction and support that will enhance and extend the learning experience." Anne O'Connor

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. Therefore, we follow the Early Excellence pedagogy, and we have environments that provide continuous provision, at St. Lawrence we call the continuous provision journey 'Pathways to Learning.' Our vision is that learning involves play, exploration and investigation and through these various routes it creates a pathway to get to the end goal.

The classroom and outdoors are set up with different learning zones so that children can choose which area to access during 'Pathways to Learning' time. Each learning area has cross-curricular resources, which children can access independently throughout the day. Continuous provision provides children with



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stimulating, active play to encourage creative and critical thinking alongside other children, as well as on their own.

Children are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interest, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, and questioning. They teach and extend play whilst developing skills and language which ultimately deepen the learning.

We understand that outdoor play is of equal importance as indoor play and that the outdoor classroom offers children 'bigger', 'louder' and 'messier' experiences. We therefore aim to offer free flow access to our outdoor learning areas throughout the school day.

Through our consistent, positive approach, focused on mutual respect, pupils develop strategies that support them in self-regulation, behaviour and self-control in a safe environment where high aspirations of learning can take place.

Teaching

We ensure there is a balance of child- initiated learning through continuous provision, and adult led activities, across the school day. The interaction between the adult and child is at the centre of our curriculum offer, with the words 'every interaction is an intervention' at the core of our vision and intent. The adults respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question to develop children's skills and extend critical thinking. Speech and language skills are crucial to young people's overall development. Being able to speak clearly and process speech sounds, to understand others, to express ideas and interact with others are fundamental building blocks for a child's development. We firmly believe that 'reading and writing float on a sea of talk' and in order for children to be confident early readers and writers they need to become confident speakers who can make sense of the world around them. We see our Early Years staff as "co-adventurers" working collaboratively on this exciting journey of discovery.

There are set routines that we follow each day. Throughout the week there are designated times when the children come together to be taught in discrete sessions in Maths, Reading, Phonics, PE, Computing, PSHE and RE. Daily Phonics, Reading and Maths are core to our curriculum offer so that teachers can equip children with the knowledge and skills needed to progress.

Whole class reading and story time are important parts of the day. We want our children to develop of lifelong love of reading. Children are exposed to a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction texts to provide them with opportunities to hear and use new vocabulary. We imitate, innovate and invent stories through a Talk for Writing approach as we want our children to leave the EYFS knowing stories, both traditional and modern very well. We make sure there is always time for a whole class story during the day, as well as opportunities to enjoy books within the continuous provision.

In Reception every child is provided with their own book bag and will receive a decodable reading book which will align to the Little Wandle Revised Phonics scheme. This is our synthetic phonics scheme. In school they will share this book with an adult either on a one to one basis or in a group.



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Behaviour Expectations

Our **READY** behaviours

All stakeholders (Governors, staff, pupils and parents/carers) agree to our 5 READY behaviour expectations. These help us to ensure a consistent and positive culture is established around behaviour and attitudes towards learning throughout the school day. The 5 READY behaviour expectations provide a reference point for stakeholders and act as a reminder of how we can all work together to ensure that our school is a great place where excellent learning takes place. We believe that our READY expectations provide a deep understanding of how we can all be productive and contributing citizens that understand tolerance as an essential skill for life.

'We are **READY** to learn'

R – Respect everyone's right to learn

E – Everyone has the right to feel safe

A – Attitude is everything

D – Disruption free classrooms

Y – You can reach your potential

Tolerance of others, built on mutual respect, is an essential component of our behaviour policy. By building a respectful and tolerant community we believe that individuals are able to grow on a personal level and we develop a much deeper understanding of how we are all different and have different strengths and challenges. Using the READY behaviour expectations as a framework, we aim to develop secure relationships that allow new learning to take place when behaviours are not helping us to be 'ready' to learn. There is a shared, collective responsibility and we all have a part to play to ensure that our school is a place where amazing learning takes place.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows a combination of key objectives taken from the government document 'Development Matters, Non-Statutory Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021' and 'Birth to Five Matters, Non-Statutory Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021'.

This guidance is used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for planning a unit of work over a week. The weekly planning is based on the assessed needs of the children, building on their achievements, interests and next steps in learning. Regular assessments of children's learning are made; this information is used to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's Learning journey Floor book or stored digitally as part of the child's individual digital learning journey profile.

We track the progress of the children across EYFS to surmise whether they are working at expected age, below or above expected age. Data is updated termly and discussed in pupil progress meetings with the Headteacher. In the final term of the EYFS, a written summary is given to parents, reporting their child's



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progress against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and with reference to the Characteristics of Effective Learning. Following the revised framework (September 2021), reporting to the LA on the areas of learning

will be assessed as at age related expectation (ARE) or below ARE, the exceeding category is no longer reported but we will keep it for internal data purposes. Data is analysed to look for patterns and trends. This information informs the School Development Plan. Information is also shared with the children's Year 1 teachers to help ensure a smooth transition into the National Curriculum.

Baseline assessment

Our approach to baseline assessment ensures that we get an accurate picture of each child. On entry to Foundation Stage, children are assessed using the Government's Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) The assessment is carried out by the class teacher during the first 6 weeks of starting school. The assessment will be used as a baseline for measuring the progress primary schools make with their pupils. It will be a practitioner-led, activity-based assessment of children's early literacy, communication and language and early mathematics skills.

Parents as Partners

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution that parents make. Children's well-being is best fostered when parents and educators combine their knowledge of the child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children.

The partnership is achieved by providing opportunities by:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts school. Telephone calls are carried out in the Summer Term before children start school.
- Visiting the child in their nursery setting (covid allowing), and observing the child in their play environment. Also, to speak with nursery staff about the children's strengths, interests and areas to further develop.
- Inviting children to spend time with their teacher and teaching assistant during our "Taster Sessions."
- Parents are provided with an Early Years Handbook to help them familiarise themselves with the Early Years Curriculum and day-to-day routines.

- Arranging one-to-one meetings with families, either by phone or in person to discuss how well their child/ren have settled in and offer support if required.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents. For example, fund raising days, themed activity days, concerts including a Harvest Festival, nativity, sports day, to which all family members are invited.

- Inviting parents to attend Phonics Workshops so that parents are aware of the Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme implemented in school and how to support at home.
- Access to 'SeeSaw' as an online platform to which observations of the child's learning is shared with parents. Parents are also encouraged to use the facilities to upload their own experiences at home with their child. These are then responded to by the child's class teacher and these observations may help to inform the child's learning profile.

Inclusion



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Another aim of the home/school partnership approach is to enable early accurate identification of the child's potential need for support in some areas of growth, development or learning, and to collaborate with parents to create a common strategy for supporting the child. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against any children. All children are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school and through our Christian ethos 'we foster our school as a community, celebrating difference and diversity through respect and justice'.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We provide every child the 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 but challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children.

This is achieved 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 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.

Safeguarding

It is important to us that all children in school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children within boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We offer children 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 our Safeguarding Policy).

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children. In promoting personal well-being, the focus is on respect for each child's individuality. This allows children to act and develop as their own unique personalities.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill. On entry to school, we obtain information about a child's medical health and information from parents is updated regularly so we can meet the needs of the child.
- Seek written permission from parents for the administration of all types of medications. A record is maintained each time medicine is administered to a child and parents are informed of this on the same day.
- Gain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences and information on food allergies is sought before a child is admitted and this is acted on.



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- Record and report accidents, injuries and first aid treatment given, and parents are notified on the same day.
- Accident records are monitored to help reduce the likelihood and frequency of accidents.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs. The school behaviour policy includes a statement which references that 'staff will not give or threaten corporal punishment to a child'.
- 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. Risk assessments consider specific hazards to early year's children and how the risk will be removed or minimised.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs. The school has arrangements in place for supporting children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This includes working in partnership with Telford & Wrekin Council Early Years Qualified Teacher support team, when required.
- Provide guidance in our 'Intimate Care' Policy should a child attend school and is not yet toilet trained.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

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 with the St. Lawrence vision of 'being the best you can be, because with God all things are possible' at the heart of our school.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of all EYFS staff to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor (Sandra Davies) 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 Executive Head teacher and EYFS Lead (Head of School), will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Review and Further Developments

See school development plan & class teacher performance management review.

Review Date September 2024



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