

# **Holy Trinity CE Primary School**

## **Early Years Policy**



### **The Purpose of the Early Years Policy**

The Early Years policy in this school reflects the value and importance of early years education, both during and beyond the early years foundation stage. It provides a framework for staff, which gives guidance on practice, and outlines procedures for planning, teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluating the curriculum. The policy contributes towards raising educational standards within the school and ensures that the needs of the youngest children are met within the context of whole school policies, curriculum planning, agreed teaching approaches and organisational structures. The Early Years curriculum is developed in accordance with DFE 'The Early Years Foundation Stage', Every Child Matters and National Curriculum programmes of study for KS1.

The term 'early years' in our setting refers to the foundation stage children in the Reception class.

The policy reflects the main aims of the school, which are:

- To foster links between home, school, church and the wider community.
- To encourage each pupil to make positive contribution to the society and environment in which he or she lives.
- To foster a love of learning and to prepare children in readiness for the challenges of Year 1.

### **Staffing and Organisation**

The Early Years team all have specialist training, knowledge and expertise in working with young children and work with KS1 staff and other professionals e.g. Nurseries, Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists and the School Nurse to provide a multi - disciplinary team. Students, trainee teachers and volunteers may also be deployed to support learning as appropriate.

### **The role of all adults**

This should include:

- The recognition of the importance of the role of all significant adults; teachers, classroom assistants, Foundation Stage Practitioners and parents and guardians as partners.
- The understanding of the importance of warm, caring relationships between adult and child, to provide positive and meaningful interactions that enhance self-esteem and confidence.
- The encouragement of well-planned quality play, both indoors and outdoors, by adults who observe, interact and extend the children's activities in a way that positively affects the attitudes of learning that the children develop.
- The provision of an appropriate mix of adult directed and child initiated activities.
- Promoting children's learning through planned experiences that are challenging but achievable.
- Modelling a range of positive behaviours including British values.
- Using language that is rich and grammatically correct to develop children's language.
- Direct teaching of skills and knowledge
- Skilful and well-planned observations of children, which support the schools assessment procedures and feed into the children's individual learning journeys.

## **Confidentiality**

All adults working in the EYFS must understand that all information in the course of employment will be kept confidential. Details of children, families and staff must remain confidential and must not be discussed outside of school.

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Holy Trinity CE Primary School, children join the Reception class in the year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers, we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life. We endeavour to ensure that children "learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe." We aim to support children in their learning through "teaching and experiences that give children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life." (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014)

The EYFS is underpinned by four guiding principles:

- **Unique child**
- **Positive relationships**
- **Enabling environments**
- **Learning and developing**

## A Unique child

At Holy Trinity CE Primary School, 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 and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to their learning.

### Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Holy Trinity CE Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or background. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school, we believe that all our children matter. 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 needs of our children. 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 to close the gaps in learning and for all children to succeed.

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;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

For those children with special educational needs, the focus will be on removing barriers for children and on preventing learning difficulties developing. Children's learning difficulties will be identified at an early stage and teaching will respond quickly to areas of difficulty. This will involve working closely with parents and developing an effective strategy to meet these needs. Advice and guidance will be provided by the school SENCO (Mr. N Crabtree) children will be placed on 'Early Years Action Plus' where intervention groups and help can be given as needed. Outside agencies may become involved if 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 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 emotional well being of all children.

## **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."

At Holy Trinity CE Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for The Revised Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. 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; (care plans are written as required for individual children)
- 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 comply with all these requirements.

## **USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND CAMERA'S**

Children have their photographs taken to provide evidence of their achievements for developmental records particularly in the The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Staff, visitors, volunteers and students are not permitted to use their own mobile phones to take or record any images of children for their own records during session times.

For further information, please refer to Child Protection Policy - pages 16 and 17.

## **Health and Safety**

The school's guidelines on health, medical and safety issues are followed by the EYFS.

Parents are asked to complete a form stating three responsible named adults that are allowed to collect their child at the end of the school day. Children will only be dismissed to a Parent or Guardian at the end of the day, or a named adult on the form, unless staff have been notified

of any change. All children must be handed over personally to their Parent/Carer at the end of the day. No one under the age of 18 is allowed to collect a child in the EYFS.

At least one person who has a current Paediatric First Aid Certificate must be on the premises at all times when children are present and must accompany children on outings.

On entry to school, an emergency contact form is completed for all children, which includes medical, personal and social details. Any accident on school premises is recorded in the *School Accident Book* and parents informed dependent on the severity of the incident. If further attention is required, a child is seen by a First Aider, and then, where necessary, the parent, the Health Centre or Hospital will be contacted. If medicines are sent into school, they must be clearly labelled and handed to the Officer Manager, who will ask parents to fill in a medicine requirement form. The class teacher may oversee the use of inhalers providing written instructions have been supplied.

Weekly and daily safety checks take place in the classroom including the outdoor provision to ensure safety of the environment and equipment. Rules are shared with the children as appropriate to equipment being used in the different areas and in the different activities.

Discussions about safety are incorporated into Key Worker sessions. Topics include road safety, carrying equipment, bullying, technology, rules e.g. in the sand and water and safety around different celebrations e.g. fire safety linked to Bonfire night.

## **Positive Relationships**

At Holy Trinity CE Primary School, 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.

### **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents and guardians 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 encourage parents and guardians to work closely with staff to support their children's individual needs by asking them to sign a home school agreement and to read home reading books at least twice a week.
- We offer workshops (such as phonics, reading and maths) for parents and guardians to attend to model skills and activities.
- Each half term we have a 'Stay and Play' for Parents and Carers to attend to see what we have been learning and share in the themed food the children have made.

- We make time to focus on discussion of the children's strengths, as well as their needs.
- We check that parents and guardians understand the graduated procedures of intervention.
- We respect the different perspectives and needs of parents and guardians.
- The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and other staff ensure that there is consistent communication and consultation with parents and guardians.
- We consult with parents and carers about information that should be shared with others.
- Mrs Lord, our Learning Mentor is also available to consult with parents and guardians about their own needs or the needs of their children.

We aim to provide a range of opportunities to inform parents about children's learning experiences and progress. Opportunities include:

- Induction meeting set in the Summer term prior to children starting in September.
- Meet the Teacher - Parents are given information about how the class is run and what is expected of them when supporting their child with homework, projects etc.
- Autumn term meeting, parents are invited to an evening session on the Communication, and Language, Literacy and Mathematical aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Parents evenings held in the Autumn and Spring term
- We encourage parents to share children's achievements at home, through completing 'Magic Moments' sheets, with notes or photographs.
- Regular newsletters
- Appropriate homework for Reception children (including home reading books)
- Ideas and resources to support home learning
- End of year reports are sent home which follow the aspects of learning taught in the EYFS and comment on the characteristics of effective learning

We operate an open door policy where parents can talk with us at the start or end of the school day whenever possible.

We feel very strongly that the partnership and communication with parents and guardians should be an open and honest one. Staff recognise that effective partnership with parents has a positive impact on children's development and learning, and therefore aim to provide opportunities for parents to keep staff informed about their child's development or any concerns they may have. We value their opinions and the information they can give us, and involve them whenever we can.

There are many opportunities for contact with parents; induction meeting, parent's evening, support and advice for parents of children with special needs, parents sharing special skills and hobbies, parents supporting their children by reading at home, and other forms of home learning.

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.

We believe that it is very important that parents and staff work closely together, as sharing our knowledge of the children will enable us to plan appropriate experiences and learning opportunities.

## **Enabling Environments**

At Holy Trinity CE Primary School, 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 challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

### **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

Long term planning documents the learning opportunities provided by areas of the continuous provision within prime and specific areas e.g. what learning might occur in the book area.

Medium term planning contains details of how provision may be enhanced, to link with a theme and support progression in learning.

Short term planning includes details of adult led activities, specific resources and key questions and vocabulary.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Our **Formative Assessment** informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of spontaneous observations, focused observations, photographs and discussions with children, parents and staff. This range of evidence is then used to inform judgements against the EYFS Development Matters statements, identify next steps and inform **short term** planning. Each child has a learning journey which informs our formative and summative assessment.

At Holy Trinity CE Primary School, we use the Lancashire Pupil Tracker to record **Summative Assessment** against the EYFS Profile. Each child's level of development is tracked and recorded against age appropriate expectations. CEM by Durham University baseline is used on entry and exit in the Reception class. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents and guardians, reporting their progress against the ELG's and the Characteristics of Effective Learning. A copy of the Profile report will also be given to the Year 1 teacher.

### **The Learning Environment**

The classroom is organised 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 areas are attractive and suitably resourced so that children are encouraged to use them and engage in purposeful, challenging activities with or without the presence of an adult.

Resources are organised in such a way that children are enabled to make informed choices, select independently what they need and take responsibility for clearing away.

Children will be able to relate personally to the resources provided so that they:

- Reflect children's varied home and community experiences;
- Reflect the culture of the local community and the wider world.
- Avoid gender and other types of stereotyping.

The outdoor learning environment contributes to all areas of learning. 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 the chance 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 seven areas of learning. Children have access to the whole learning environment both indoors and outdoors. Resources outdoors and indoors are organised similarly to enable children to be independent and take responsibility. All children are encouraged to take part in the full range of outdoor experiences.

## Learning and Development

At Holy Trinity CE Primary School, 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.

### 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 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. 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. All staff work together to foster the characteristics of effective early learning.

- **Playing and exploring**
- **Active learning**
- **Creating and thinking critically**

### Playing and Exploring

Children are encouraged to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go' in all the areas of learning.

This characteristic of learning focuses on a children's engagement- with the resources they use, the environment they are in, and the people around them. It emphasises the importance of children having opportunities to actively deepen their own knowledge and understanding of the world through the many different experiences they have including open-ended, hands-on experiences.

### **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. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction 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 seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

We recognise that the three Prime Areas (PSE, CL, and PD) underpin all the other areas of learning. The remaining Specific Areas support them and help strengthen children's learning and

development. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area, there are Developmental Matters and Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

### **Leadership and Management**

Regular staff meetings are held to discuss assessment, individual pupils, pupil welfare and SEN.

Priorities relating to the EYFS are identified in the School Improvement Plan as appropriate and any areas of underperformance are challenged.

Roles and responsibilities for all staff are reviewed in line with Appraisal Procedures and staff training and development needs are outlined in the School Improvement Plan.

All staff and governors are aware of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the importance of this Key Stage in relation to children's learning and its impact on raising standards across the school. The EYFS class teacher Liaises with the Year One class teacher to ensure a smooth transition. Termly pupil progress meetings and end of year moderation meetings are held with the Head Teacher, senior leadership team and another local primary school. The LA moderates the School's assessments on a planned cycle to ensure that teacher assessments are accurate and reflect the abilities of the children.

### **Monitoring and Review**

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

The Head Teacher, School adviser, Senior leadership team and EYFS leader will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Monitoring and evaluation procedures are as stated in the Monitoring and Evaluation Schedule..

Autumn Term 2015

Next review - Autumn Term 2017