



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date Agreed: April 2021

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Signed: _____

Chair of Governors

**Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan Academies Trust
St Blasius C of E Primary Academy**

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Revision Record

Revision No.	Date Issued	Prepared By	Approved	Comments
1	30 th April 2015	AJ	ESC	New policy
2	31 st October 2016	SP	Govs	Updated/adapted policy
3	October 2017	CW	Gov	Reviewed policy
4	March 2019	CW	TCP	Reviewed policy
5	March 2020	CW	LGB	Reviewed policy
6	April 2021	CW	LGB	Reviewed policy – changes to review term

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Introduction

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to achieve 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 provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.' (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

The Revised Early Years Foundation Stage (Revised EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. In our academy, all children join us and complete the EYFS in the Reception Year.

Newly adopted framework

St Blasius has taken the opportunity of being an 'Early Adopter' school in preparation for the new curriculum that will be rolled out to all schools in September 2021.

Rationale

At St Blasius Church of England Primary Academy we believe the early years are the essential foundation for all future learning and that every child has the right to equality of opportunity. We recognise the importance of play in the child's learning and development and the need to provide structured learning opportunities through a variety of experiences. We recognise the importance and value of careful observations of the child's achievements to ensure the next steps on their learning journey are planned for.

We believe that a strong partnership between our academy and home is essential and that children learn and achieve best when this support is shared.

We encourage our children to value and respect themselves, others and their environment.

We recognise the value of good liaison between our academy and pre-schooling.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

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, celebration/sharing circle times, reward stickers and certificates to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

At St Blasius Church of England Primary Academy we understand that children learn best when they have positive relationships with the adults who are responsible for them. We recognise the welfare requirements for the EYFS 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 in the setting are trained and suitable to work there.
- Ensure the setting and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose and that risk assessments are ongoing.
- 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 children.

Positive Relationships

At St Blasius Church of England Primary Academy we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators and value the contribution that parents make. In order to continue the learning journey as partners we begin working with new parents during the summer term prior to entry.

We do this through:

- Home visits.
- Information meetings.
- Induction days to their class with their child to meet the staff and other children and their families.
- Access to the academy's weekly newsletter, brochure and website.
- A home to academy two way communication book for both staff and parents to share useful information.
- Informal visits to the class for 'Come and Join in' sessions.
- Two formal learning conversation meetings where each pupil's personal learning journey is discussed alongside the characteristics of learning – one per term.
- To share information about each child's learning journey, parents will be invited to a meeting both in the autumn and spring term. IN the summer term parents will receive a report that includes their child's result of the EYFS as well as a written report on the CEOL.
- Providing a termly information sheet with ideas to support learning at home.
- Family learning, workshops and a range of other activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, academy and parents.
- Parental access to 'ClassDojo' to send messages/photos and include information about their child at home. Parents can see messages/photos that teachers post of children completing activities at school also.

Enabling Environments

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.

It is important to us that all children in the academy are 'safe'. We aim to guide and support children to help them understand the need for rules and how to make fair decisions. 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 psychological well-being of all children (see child protection including safeguarding policy).

**A Unique Child + Positive Relationships + Enabling Environments =
Learning and Development ☺**

Observation, Planning and Assessment

Planning in the EYFS follows Guidance regarding the 'Early Years Outcomes' (previously 'Development Matters') and pupil's current interests. These plans are used as a guide to form our short term planning (weekly planning), which is based around the individual children's needs and interests. Plans are necessarily flexible and frequently altered in response to children's needs and interests.

We make regular assessments of the children's learning and use this information to ensure future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment mainly takes the forms of observation and annotated planning. Information from home is encouraged and included as appropriate. In the final term of Reception, we provide a report on the child's COEL and their final ELG's.

Parents can discuss these judgements with the class teacher if they wish.

Judgements will be based upon a 'Best Fit' model. Practitioners will:

- Review their knowledge of each child from all sources (collected observations, annotated and retrospective planning, professional dialogue between practitioners, knowledge held that can be articulated).
- Consider the entirety of the Age/stage band/ELG descriptor, take a holistic view and not see/address individual sections in isolation.
- Make a comparison to earlier or later age/stage bands to see which fits best.
- Remember children will be able to do/know/understand more than is in the 'Early Years Outcomes' descriptors for their age/stage.
- Use their professional judgement to make the best decision as to whether the child is 'typical' for their age or not.

The Learning Environment

The Reception classroom should be spacious, organised, well-resourced and well labelled, in order to allow children to explore and learn securely, independently and safely. It should be kept tidy to engender pride, respect, care, expectation and the value of resources. The Early Years team will need to model to the children how this should be done. This includes 'outside areas' where children should develop all areas of learning undertaking activities that cannot be done indoors. Outside areas are often shared with Year 1 pupils, particularly during the autumn term to aide with transition to Year 1. There are areas where the children can be active but also quiet, reflective areas. Children can find and access equipment and resources independently. There is a fenced and gated outdoor area accessible via the patio doors and a nearby larger playground, field and adventure trail, which are used for some outdoor activities. The academy grounds and the locality of the academy provide learning opportunities and are regularly used to develop all areas of learning. Where possible, 'real' objects will be used in the environment.

Learning and Development

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 all inter-connected.

"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"

The day will be broken up into 'segments' of taught learning for the children, including a focus on developing writing, phonics and mathematics. The length of these sessions will increase as the year progresses and be balanced with child initiated learning activities. RE will be taught in lessons every week, following the Hampshire Syllabus 'Living Difference 3' alongside 'Understanding Christianity'

Play

Play is a child's work. Play can be:

- Creative, repetitive or dramatic.

- Complex or simple.
- A way of developing communication skills.
- A way in which social skills can be learnt.
- Structured or unstructured.
- A way of dealing with emotions.
- A means of developing self-awareness or self-esteem.
- A means of extending a child's concentration levels.
- An opportunity to communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.
- An opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe environments.

The process of play is more important than the end product.

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 over 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.”

We encourage children to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults 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 setting to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

Prime Areas of Learning:

- Personal, social and emotional development.
- Physical Development.
- Communication and Language.

Specific Areas of Learning:

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

“The **prime** areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas... The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas and provide important contexts for learning.” (*Early Years Outcomes, previously Development Matters, in the Early Years Foundation Stage*)

All of these areas of learning are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals in the academy and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children and their families are valued within our academy. We believe that all our children matter and that they should be given every opportunity to achieve their best. 'Every Child Matters' and we provide 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. The EYFS is also covered by the academy's Single Equalities and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policies.

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 all children, children with SEN, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from different social and cultural backgrounds, children from different ethnic or minority 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.
- Using 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.

Entry to Reception

All pupils will be offered a full-time place starting in the September after they turn 4. We will encourage all children to start with us on a full-time basis immediately. Part-time schooling (up until the term after a child reaches their 5th birthday) will only be negotiated with a parent, where it is clear that the child is not coping with the demands of full-time education. EYFS staff will discuss the individual needs of the children and address any transition suggestions or concerns with parents.

Monitoring and Review

The EYFS teacher/s and staff will follow the principles in the policy.

The Principal and Senior Leadership Team will monitor the EYFS as part of the whole academy monitoring schedule e.g. through profile moderation, lesson observation etc.