



St Alphege C of E Infant and Nursery School



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

“To develop a love for learning and life in a caring and Christian community.”

EYFS Policy – Federation Governor responsible: Meryl Homer
Adopted by Curriculum Committee: Spring 2019 Review date: Spring 2022

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Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfill their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five 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 together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.” (Introduction Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2017, page 5)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. 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 ‘school readiness’ through providing them with a “broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and in life.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2017)

At St Alphege C of E Infant School we recognise, and our practice is committed to, the principles outlined in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2017).

Four principles underpinning EYFS:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

A Unique Child

At St Alphege C of E Infant 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. We also recognise that children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their confidence and experiences. Our aim is to provide learning experiences in play which reflect children’s personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn. We use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing and class assemblies and rewards, to foster and encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

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Inclusion/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We value the diversity of all children and their families at St Alphege Infant School, regardless of race, religion or ability. In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best through setting realistic and challenging expectations that meet their needs. We do this by taking account of their range of life experiences through adapting the 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.

Welfare

It is of paramount importance 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 psychological well-being of all children. (See Federation Child Protection Policy 2018.)

"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." (Statutory Framework 2017, page 16)

At St Alphege CofE Infant School 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.

We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding 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.

Positive Relationships

At St Alphege C of E Infant School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure and positive 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 acknowledge the importance of the partnership between parents and all professional bodies involved in the education and care of the children.

We do this through our induction and transition process:

- Nursery parents are invited to parent workshops at the beginning of the academic year, focusing on the importance of learning through play. An induction pack is given to parents, containing general day to day information. The workshop also provides an opportunity for parents to meet the Nursery team.

- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher and key workers before starting school during “stay and play” sessions;
- Opportunities are provided for the children from the Nursery setting to familiarise themselves with the wider school environment and staff e.g. joining in celebration assemblies and class assemblies, using the school building and grounds as part of their learning activities, meeting the lunchtime supervisors, having school lunch with their parents and visits to spend time in their new Reception classes with staff.
- Children who have not attended our nursery and their parents also spend time in school to meet with staff and be involved in activities in their new classroom, prior to their starting in the Autumn Term.
- Foundation Stage 2 (Reception Year): parents are invited to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first half term of their child’s Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child.
- We encourage parents to talk to the child’s teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year, where the teacher and the parent discuss the child’s progress in private. At these meetings the parents are given the targets that their child is currently working on and these then build the discussion for the next parents meeting in February. Parents receive a report on their child’s attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- The school also organises a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: school visits, parent workshops for Reading and Writing, Mathematics, Curriculum evenings, invitations to view work, PTA events, Sports Day, etc.
- Opportunities are available through ongoing dialogue throughout the year, both verbally and written through reading diaries, shared observations and holiday journals.
- regular written communications keep parents informed about school events and activities.
- During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observations, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.
- Prior to starting in Year 1 the Reception children visit their new classrooms and meet their new teachers.

- Reception teachers meet with the Year 1 teachers to discuss the children, their achievements and their progress. The teachers are also 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 informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Enabling Environments

At St Alphege CofE Infant 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. All adults in the setting contribute to this process and account is taken of information provided by parents and prior settings.

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure, inspired and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up to reflect the seven areas of learning.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways, including photos and written recording.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

At St Alphege CofE Infant school we highlight the development matters statements at the end of each term for each child which reflects their level of development and the progress they have made.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's indicating whether they are developing: "emerging" (not yet reaching), meeting: "expected" or exceeding the expected levels of development. A copy of this is also given to the Year 1 teaching staff commenting on levels of attainment along with ongoing dialogue about each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning (playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically).

We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the Class teacher.

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 interconnected.

Teaching and learning style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. 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 have of how children develop and learn, 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 that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- 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 and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At St Alphege we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and

- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2017)

Playing and exploring

“Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.” (Statutory Framework 2017, page 9)

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice 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. 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.”
(Every Child Matters – Active Learning - Learning and Development 4.2 page 1)

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 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.”

(Every Child Matters – Creativity and Critical thinking - Learning and Development 4.3 page 1)

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

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are “prime areas,” and four “specific areas.”

The prime areas are

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

The specific areas are

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world and
- 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.

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the Inclusion manager in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

As a church school, the children also follow a Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural scheme of work and a Collective Worship programme. In the nursery children have a "quiet" time each day, where they reflect and discuss social and moral issues, listen to stories from the Bible, pray and sing hymns. The children in Reception join the main school for collective worship. All children in the Foundation Stage follow the school R.E. curriculum and scheme of work.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and Safety

At St Alphege Infant school there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see Federation Health & Safety Policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In

addition to this in the staff handbook, safeguarding and child protection policies, there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2017, at St Alphege Infant School we undertake;

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Training is provided annually for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer." A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and informs the child's parents and/or carers on the same day." (Statutory framework for EYFS 2017)
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- Daily opportunities for healthy snacks and drink are provided for children.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see SMBC Medicine Administration Policy).
- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy
- A safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staffs' own personal use.
- Also see Whole School Health & Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy, PSHE Policy and Safeguarding Policies.

Review

This policy reflects the current philosophy and practice within the Foundation Stage at St Alphege CofE Infant and Nursery School but in light of new proposals and theories will be reviewed and revised as appropriate by staff, or in any case on a 3-year cycle according to the School Improvement Plan.

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EYFS Policy – Federation Governor responsible: Meryl Homer

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