



Early Years Policy

St Michael's Nursery and Infant School

Subject Lead: Mrs Stacey Hudson

Introduction

At St Michael's Nursery and Infant School, we believe that our Early Years Foundation Stage is crucial to developing firm foundations to be built upon throughout our school journey and beyond. It is our intent that the children who enter our EYFS develop physically, verbally, emotionally, creatively, intellectually and spiritually whilst embedding a positive attitude to school and learning in order for each child to achieve their full potential. We set high expectations throughout all areas of school life and beyond. We believe that all children deserve to be valued as an individual and we are passionate in supporting all children to achieve their full, unique potential.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

Our Tiny Ted, Nursery and Reception class follow the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework which can be downloaded at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

These are the prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

Four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These are regularly assessed through observations and staff promoting the development of these skills. The three characteristics are:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things and events around them and ‘have a go’
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different experiences and develop strategies for choosing their own ways to do things

Planning

We use Development Matters (DfE 2021) to help us create our EYFS curriculum.

Tiny Teds have adopted a ‘curiosity approach’ based on child led learning. Key Workers build positive relationships and plan activities based on the child’s developmental needs.

For Nursery and Reception, we have carefully mapped out milestones for each area of learning across the year, ensuring that we the requirements of the educational programmes in the statutory framework for the EYFS. The planning is sequenced to help our children build their learning over time. The plan shows progression from Nursery to Reception and aims to provide the children with the skills and prior knowledge needed for Key Stage 1 and beyond.

Teachers use these milestones to plan learning opportunities based on the children’s interests and open-ended topics. Every child develops in their own unique way. The milestones in the long-term plan are suggested general focuses for each half term however we use our professional judgement to support individual needs within their learning journey, adjusting our practice appropriately.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through high quality, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Our continuous provision indoors and outdoors is carefully planned and resourced to enable progression through skills and common play behaviours. The provision enables children to learn skills, challenge their thinking and help them embed concepts.

Assessment and Recording

Ongoing assessment through day-to-day observations and quality interacts enables us to recognise children’s progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. ‘Wow’ moments are recorded on individual Class Dojo profiles, parents and carers are encouraged to add to these online learning journals. Parents and carers are kept up to date with their child’s progress through formal parent meetings, Class Dojo platform and informal chats. Class floor books are used to record whole class learning.

Staff use the Development Matters Checkpoints to identify any developmental concerns.

Key Workers in our Tiny Teds room carry out Two-Year Old Progress Checks for children between two and three years. They are carried out at Autumn, Spring and Summer assessment points, ideally after the child has been in the setting for one term, allowing practitioners time to get to know the child. Practitioners provide parents with a short, written summary of their child's development in the prime areas of learning. Parents are invited to a meeting to discuss the progress check. Practitioners discuss with parents how the summary can be used to support learning and development at home and describe the activities and strategies they intend to adopt in their setting to address any issue or concerns

Data is recorded termly to show if a child is 'on track' or 'not on track'. In Nursery and Reception Long Term plans are used as a guide to what 'on track' looks like. Teachers make a judgement based on their knowledge of the child and from professional judgements with other practitioners who work with the children. Recording of evidence should be quick and simply so that it does not take away time from high quality interactions with the children.

In Reception, the class teacher carries out the Reception Baseline Assessment within the first six weeks of school and submits the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile in the summer term.

In accordance to the EYFS statutory guidance, each child is assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents. In Tiny Teds, each practitioner is assigned 'key person' for up to 4 children. In Nursery and Reception, the class teach is the key person for all children in their class. Half termly progress meetings will be held with the Early Years Leader, where staff working with the children can discuss progress, development, concerns and next steps.

Inclusion

We believe that all children should be supported and inspired to achieve their very best. We fully support all children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), in line with the SEN Code of Practice and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014. St. Michael's Nursery and Infants prides itself in being an inclusive school and we endeavour to support every child regardless of their level of need.

All children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage at a level and a pace that is appropriate to their abilities. At times, when it is appropriate, modifications to the curriculum may be made.

Health and Safety

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. We rigorously follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024. Procedures and protocols are carried out in line with the school's health and safety and safeguarding policy.

Use of Electronic Devices and Digital Photography

In line with our school's safeguarding policy and user agreement, personal devices that can take and record photographs or videos must not be used whilst children are present. Photographs of children must only be taken and stored on registered school devices, permission from parents is obtained before children start the setting.

Signed:



Stacey Hudson

13/09/24

Early Years Lead