

Slindon Church of England Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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At Slindon CofE Primary school we serve our local community and enable our school family to flourish. We recognise that everyone is *Unique* and want to ensure they are able to *Learn and Develop* in a high quality learning environment. We enrich the spirit in an *Enabling Environment*, in which *Positive relationships* foster creativity and curiosity. In hope we encourage our community to shine brightly and be courageous advocates of our world, shaping their futures for the better.

The Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control; against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5; 22-23

Let Your Light Shine ~ Matthew 5:16

Introduction

Slindon Church of England Primary School is led by four overarching principles which reflect those set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. These principles run through the ethos of our school and feed into our policy and pedagogy.

Within our Early Years Foundation Stage policy, we recognise that all children are **unique** and join our school with different life experiences, abilities and beliefs. We respect, value and celebrate each child's uniqueness and recognise the positive contribution this has to our learning community.

The **positive relationships** that we are able to develop in our small community are supportive, nurturing and inclusive. This enables us to maintain an **enabling environment** in which children feel safe, confident and capable of taking risks and accepting challenges; supporting children to develop into strong and independent learners who thrive through challenge, personal enjoyment and achievement.

As a school, we recognise the importance of establishing **positive relationships** with the families and professionals involved in the care of the children who attend Slindon Church of England Primary School. We actively foster and maintain working partnerships with parents, outside agencies and other professionals, to ensure a collaborative working environment in which both pupils, their families and the staff feel happy, safe and supported.

We respect that everybody **learns and develops** in different ways and at different rates. Our Early Years Foundation Stage policy seeks to ensure the provision of a broad, balanced and creative curriculum with high quality care for all children within its Early Years Provision irrespective of gender, ethnic or social background, religion or disability or Special Educational Need.

We recognise the importance of maintaining an **enabling environment** which values the role of play and talk as intrinsic to the way in which young children learn and consolidate their learning. We maintain a learning environment that facilitates a variety of high quality, stimulating resources for children to experience and interact with both inside and outside, across all areas of learning with engaging and challenging learning outcomes.

As a Christian school, the Christian values that guide us every day are intrinsic to many of our policies, including our Early Years Foundation Stage policy. Our Fruits of the Spirit: **Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control**, not only guide us in our attitude to God, to other people and ourselves, but are both modelled and explicitly taught within our Early Years curriculum:

As a Rights Respecting School, our Early Years Foundation Stage Policy is underpinned by the following articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child.

- Articles 3/ 5: The adults in our school community, including our parents/ carers and families will act as role models.
- Articles 2/ 12/ 30: We respect the right to be listened to and listen to others, to give an opinion and have the right to protection against discrimination.
- Article 13: We respect the right to find things out and share what we think with others, through art, talking or writing, unless it breaks the rights of others.
- Article 17: We respect the right to collect information from radio, newspapers, television and the internet, but to also be protected from information that could be harmful.
- Articles 19/ 24: We respect the right to feel safe at school and help others feel safe, to not be hurt or badly treated.
- Article 28: We respect the right to learn and let others enjoy their learning.
- Articles 15/31: We respect the right to join in and be part of a team, to join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others.
- Article 29: We respect the right to develop our potential.
- Article 27: We respect the right to look after our own and others' property.

1. Intent

'The Early Years Foundation Stage' (EYFS) sets the statutory standards that all early years providers must meet. This includes all maintained schools, non-maintained schools, independent schools and all providers on the Early Years Register.

The Early Years Foundation Stage aims to provide:

- Quality and consistency in all early years settings.
- A secure foundation for all children for good progress through school and life.
- Partnerships between different practitioners.
- Partnerships between parents or carers and practitioners.
- Equality of opportunity for all children.

At Slindon Church of England Primary School it is our intent to:

- Provide a bright, welcoming, stimulating and safe environment in which children and their parents feel happy and secure.
- Actively develop close working partnerships between staff and parents, enabling parents to be directly involved in their child's learning. (In support of RRSA Articles 5 & 18)
- Provide a broad, balanced and creative curriculum, building on the children's prior knowledge, providing challenges and new experiences across all areas of learning. Laying the foundations for further learning in Key stage one and beyond.
- Promote the value of play as a learning experience. (In support of RRSA Article 31)
- Provide a happy, positive and inclusive environment that is sensitive to the needs of all pupils irrespective of gender, ethnic or social background, religion or disability or Special Educational Need. (In support of RRSA Articles 2, 12, 13, 14 & 15)
- Work as an effective staff team, providing quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind, utilising the support of outside professionals and agencies where appropriate.

Implementation

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on requirements set out in:

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), September 2023.

Reception Baseline Assessment Framework, May 2021.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, 2023.

3. Structure of the Early Years Foundation Stage

At Slindon Church of England Primary School, we strongly believe that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn best when they feel safe, nurtured, valued and respected. We understand and promote the importance of learning first hand, through purposeful and meaningful interactions with others, through physical activity and play.

Our small and nurturing Reception cohort, with space for 12 children, is combined with year 1 and 2, with 1 teacher and 3 teaching assistants. The curriculum is topic based, child interest led and recognises the benefits of learning outside the classroom. Therefore, our curriculum is largely planned for and facilitated in our extensive and beautifully situated outdoor learning environment and also takes full advantage of local forest school facilities.

4. Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, September 2023.

The EYFS framework is comprised of seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, three areas known as the prime areas are seen as

particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

4.1 Planning

The Early Years Foundation Stage at Slindon Church of England Primary School provides a happy, safe, caring, stimulating and well-organised environment in which children learn by building upon what they already know and can do.

Staff at Slindon Church of England Primary School look carefully at the children in their care, consider their needs, their interests and their stages of development and use all of this information to help plan challenging and enjoyable experiences across all areas of Learning and Development.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning inform Early Years staff of children's preferred learning styles. We use these to plan effective next step learning opportunities matched to the children's interests and abilities.

The three characteristics are:

- Playing and exploring: Finding out and exploring, Playing with what they know, Being willing to 'have a go'
- Active learning: Being involved and concentrating, keeping trying, enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- Creating and thinking critically: Having their own ideas, making links, choosing ways to do things.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff work with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) to consider whether specialist support is required, and work in partnership with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive and purposeful interaction. Our outdoor provision mirrors and extends the opportunities available to the children in the classroom environment and is further enhanced by weekly trips to the local forest to take part in learning outside of the classroom environment.

Teaching in our Reception class is organised through a range of approaches and provides a balance of child-initiated and adult led activities:

- Planned focused activities where adults work with small groups of children at a time. Teachers will differentiate the activity to meet the needs of every child participating.
- Small Group teaching of early reading and writing through the systematic synthetic phonic scheme Phonics Shed.
- Whole Class teaching for short periods of time such as shared storytime, direct teaching (for example of maths), songs and rhymes, discussions and sharing work.
- Opportunities for teachers to work alongside children as they develop their own interests in particular areas of the curriculum.

4.3 The Learning Environment

We recognise that play (structured and self-initiated) and talk are key ways in which young children learn and consolidate their learning. In facilitating high quality child-initiated learning we ensure provision for a stimulating learning environment both inside and outside across all areas of learning with engaging and challenging learning outcomes. We also ensure a variety of high quality, stimulating resources are available for children to experience and interact with.

4.4 The role of the Early Years Phase Leader

The role of the Early Years Phase Leader includes but is not limited to:

- Monitoring planning, assessment and record-keeping of pupil's work and feeding back to staff
- Feedback to the headteacher and Governing Body
- Supporting staff with all aspects of the planning, assessment and the effective delivery of the Early Years curriculum.
- Ensuring staff are up to date with current educational ideas and initiatives relating to Early Years.

5. Special Educational Needs *(In support of RRSA Article 23)*

We strongly believe that early identification of individual needs is crucial in enabling staff to meet the needs of every child. Concerns are discussed with parents at an early stage in an open, honest and sensitive manner. The school SEND leader will offer support and advice, seeking outside agency partnerships as appropriate. Further information can be found in our SEND Policy.

Impact

6. Assessment and Reporting to Parents *(In support of RRSA Articles 16 & 18)*

At Slindon Church of England Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff actively observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations along with those shared by parents and/or carers are used to shape future planning.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA, May 2021). The reception baseline is an age-appropriate assessment of mathematics and literacy.

The assessment consists of:

Mathematics tasks

- early number
- early calculation (early addition/subtraction)
- mathematical language
- early understanding of pattern

Literacy, Communication and Language tasks

- early vocabulary
- phonological awareness
- early comprehension

The purpose of the reception baseline assessment is to provide an on-entry assessment of pupil attainment. This is recorded on the national pupil data base and is used as a starting point from which a cohort-level progress measure to the end of key stage 2 (KS2) can be created.

At the **end of the Early Years Foundation Stage**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals (appendix 1), indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development ('expected')
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and where possible in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. The EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority and the Department for Education.

7. Transition and Working with parents

Key to ensuring high quality early years experience is to ensure continuity between all settings and to ensure that the children's social, emotional and educational needs are considered as a priority. At Slindon Church of England Primary School, transition is seen as a process, not as an event and is planned for and discussed with parents, children and practitioners of the pre-school settings that the children attend.

At Slindon Church of England Primary School we also recognise that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators and that when parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning.

We strongly believe that this parent partnership is best fostered prior to the admission stage when parents have the opportunity to visit and discuss the school's ethos and vision. On admission to Slindon Church of England Primary School new families are offered:

- Home visits. Early years staff visit new children in their own home before they start school, building relationships and getting to know the child and their parents in their own environment.
- Transition events: EYFS staff facilitate events for parents and their children to attend during the summer term before their child starts school. Providing opportunities to familiarise themselves with the new environment, meet future classmates and their families, and outline the early years curriculum to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's home learning
- At the beginning of the Autumn Term Reception children are offered a transitional timetable and parents are invited to a 'six weeks in' meeting with the Reception teacher who provides key information to talk about how their child has settled in and upcoming events in the school year.

We further encourage and promote parent partnership through:

- Showing respect and understanding for the role of the parent in the child's education.
- Listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns they may have.
- Making parents feel welcome by being friendly, approachable and having an open door policy.
- Maintaining an on-going dialogue.
- Being flexible in arrangements for settling children in.
- Meeting with parents of Reception children regularly to discuss progress.
- Inviting parents in to share their child's work.
- Inviting parents in to the school to share their specialised skills.
- Inviting parents to accompany staff on weekly forest school and other trips.

Parents and/or carers are able to maintain informal communication with Early Years staff daily at drop off and collection times. Formal discussions about progress and development are facilitated through termly parent consultations. In addition the EYFS profile and school report helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures *(In support of RRSA Article 24)*

The safety of every child is paramount at Slindon Church of England Primary School. We have a robust Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and procedures in place to ensure the children in our care are protected.

In order to promote the health and wellbeing of all children we:

Promote the safety and welfare of the children in our care by ensuring:

- a supply of fresh drinking water is available on the premises at all times.
- regular discussions are held with parent/carers to ensure that individual needs are met as appropriate.
- children's dietary needs are discussed with parents and acted upon as appropriate.
- fruit and milk are available during the session for children to access independently.

Promote good health and prevent the spread of infection by taking appropriate action when children are ill by ensuring:

- a qualified first aider is accessible in every class.
- accidents and injuries are recorded in an accident book.

Manage the behaviour of the children in our care in a way that is appropriate for their individual needs and stage of development and in line with our behaviour policy.

Ensure that adults who have access to children, or who look after children, are suitably vetted and trained.

Ensure that the settings are fit for purpose and that furniture and equipment is safe by ensuring:

- a fire and emergency evacuation procedure is in place with regular practice evacuations.

Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe and efficient management of the setting.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Early Years Lead every year.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

10. Links with other policies

Safeguarding policy and procedures

Procedure for responding to illness

Administering medicines policy

Emergency evacuation procedure

Procedure for checking the identity of visitors

Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children

Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints

Appendix 1: Early Learning Goals

Early Learning Goals

Communication and Language	
Listening, Attention and Understanding	- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. - Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding. - Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.
Speaking	- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary. - Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate. - Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development	
Self-Regulation	- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly. - Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate. - Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
Managing Self	- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge. - Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly. - Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.
Building Relationships	- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others. - Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers. - Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Understanding the World	
Past and Present	- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society. - Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. - Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.
People, Culture and Communities	- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps. - Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. - Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.
The Natural World	- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants. - Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. - Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Physical Development	
Gross Motor Skills	- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others. - Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing. - Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.
Fine Motor Skills	- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases. - Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery. - Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.
Literacy	
Comprehension	- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary. - Anticipate (where appropriate) key events in stories. - Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role play.
Word Reading	- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs. - Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending. - Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.
Writing	- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. - Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters. - Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Mathematics	
Number	- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number. - Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5. - Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.
Numerical Patterns	- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system. - Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity. - Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including even and odd, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.
Expressive Arts and Design	
Creating with Materials	- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. - Share their creations, explaining the process they have used. - Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.
Being Imaginative and Expressive	- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher. - Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs. - Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and (when appropriate) try to move in time with music.

