

FEDERATION OF ST. NICHOLAS C OF E MIDDLE SCHOOL, PINVIN, AND  
PINVIN C OF E FIRST SCHOOL



EYFS POLICY

TL04

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Chair of Governor's signature.....

Headteacher's signature.....

# **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Our approach to marking and feedback is underpinned by our vision statement. As a Church of England Federation, we will consider all aspects of the work within the Early Years in this context:

*'Set in the context of our Christian Foundation, the Pinvin Federation of St. Nicholas Church of England Middle School, Pinvin and Pinvin Church of England First School is committed to providing excellence in education, where everyone has the opportunity to develop a love of life-long learning. Our aim is for all to have the opportunity to excel and that through a strong sense of team and community we can achieve together'*

### **We expect our pupils to be:**

- *Confident and enthusiastic*
- *Independent*
- *Creative thinkers*
- *Hard working*
- *Caring towards each other*
- *The future*

### **We expect our staff to:**

- *Be a role model for our pupils*
- *Be professional in approach*
- *Have high expectations*
- *Enjoy learning themselves*
- *Be supportive and encouraging*
- *Make education fun*

### **We expect our stakeholders to:**

- *Be supportive of our Christian values*
- *Partners in improving learning*
- *Committed to making the Federation a leading establishment of education*

Our vision is underpinned through our focus on Rights, Respects and Responsibilities. A rights-respecting school not only teaches about children's rights but also models rights and respect in all its relationships: between pupils and adults, between adults themselves and between pupils. Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states: "You have the right to a good quality education. Within this right sits the importance of effective Early Years practice. The Early Years are vital in setting the path of a child's future learning and provide the critical first steps in our Federation.

This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance on the EYFS. Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are in our Reception class.

## **AIM**

At the Pinvin Federation of Schools we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future

learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the EYFS 'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil 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.'

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, The Curriculum Policy, The Mastery Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy, the Performance Measures Policy, the Feedback and Marking Policy, the Positive Behaviour Policy and the Homework Policy.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

## **PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE**

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Have an EYFS team approach to develop close relationships with individual children through specialist teaching assistants and teaching personnel
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

## **FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM**

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

The Unique Child reaches out to relate to people and things through Characteristics of Effective Learning, which move through all areas of learning. The Characteristics of Effective Learning are:

- playing and exploring
- active learning
- creating and thinking critically

These areas are not just at the core of the EYFS but intrinsic to the delivery of the curriculum throughout the Pinvin Federation.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the prime areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the 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

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

In the Early Years, we write medium to long term overviews using the EYFS based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. We also follow the children's interests where appropriate. These plans are reviewed by the Executive Headteacher and Head of School. Please see our plans for more details. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Practitioners working with the youngest children and/or most vulnerable in Reception will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at the Pinvin Federation and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole class and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds', teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

### **OBSERVATION & ASSESSMENT**

The pupils on entry receive are baselined against Development Matters and through a formal testing process provided by Durham University (CEM). The scores from these are combined by the school to provide an on-entry profile, this is shared with parents.

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with parents. We hold paper based documentation in relation to a child's journey but also collate records electronically through a programme called 2Simple. In the Autumn term and Spring term, parents are invited to attend a parents' evening to discuss their child's progress and development. In addition, we have open sessions for parents to see the learning in action within our EYFS Reception class, normally at the start of the school day, we also hold other open events in line with wider opportunities to see the Federation in action.

Within the final term of Reception, we provide the parents with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. In addition, each pupil receives an end of year test through CEM that looks at the attainment and progress of each child from entry, this is shared with parents. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the Reception teacher in preparation for Year 1.

### **SAFETY**

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety. There are risk assessments in place, including one for the outside covered pond area.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, daily healthy snack, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

### **INCLUSION**

We value all our children as individuals at the Federation, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of

our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

## **HANDWRITING**

The Federation operates a system of cursive writing from Reception, but this is progressive from the stages of early mark making, to deeper meaning and then to the formation of letters and words.

## **PARENTS AS PARTNERS & THE WIDER CONTEXT**

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways. All pupils have a home liaison book that acts as a dialogue between home and school. The Reception staff are always available for the 10 minutes before the day starts and the 15 minutes at the end of the school day. There are also opportunities as indicated above for parents to visit the Reception class on a termly basis to see learning in action.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times, we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting. As a Church of England School, all our Reception pupils have the opportunity on a termly basis to visit the local church. In addition, we have visitors from the church on a weekly basis and also our extended community including the emergency services, high school and middle school students.

## **TRANSITIONS**

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. There is ongoing transition with the local pre-school that attends the school site daily and shares lunchtime with pupils from the Early Years. The pre-school also access the school hall once a week for physical activity and have also free access to Forest School. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders. Children attend introductory sessions to Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners throughout the summer term. These sessions mainly take the form of stay and plays. In addition, there are two information sessions for parents, one which centres on basic induction, the other focuses on early language, reading and phonics.

At the start of the academic year the Reception teachers and teaching assistants conduct home visits to parents of pupils from the new intake. The Federation operates a two-week transition to full-time education, with a progressive tailored approach that increases the pupils' participation for school readiness. After two weeks, the overwhelming majority of pupils are ready for full time, where EYFS staff perceive pupils are not ready, this is discussed with the parents and a tailored approach implemented (this is mutually agreed).

In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children. There are two transition days that take place from Reception to Year 1 and a required visit from the EYFS team to year 1 in the first two weeks of the Autumn Term to see how well the pupils have settled.