



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

**Implementation date: 2020
Review date: 2022**

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

At St Michael's Community Academy we aim to develop the potential of every child within a safe, happy, caring and supportive environment which promotes an ethos of inclusion and entitlement for all.

"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. 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." Early Years Statutory Framework, 2012

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

At St Michael's Community Academy 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, as well as Celebration assemblies and rewards, such as bubbles, stickers and verbal praise to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. In addition to the aforementioned, children are rewarded with Dojo points which build up over time.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against any child. All children at St Michael's Community Academy are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences and interests when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this 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;
- providing children with the opportunity to be involved in the planning process.

Welfare

It is important 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 Whole School Safeguarding Policy)

“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.”

Early Years Statutory Framework, 2012

At St Michael’s Community Academy we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required 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 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 Michael's Community Academy we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure 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 being partners with them in their child's education through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- the EYFS team and Family Support Worker offer to visit children in their home setting prior to their starting school;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their EYFS team before starting school during 'Stay and Play' afternoons;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- developing a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents e.g. Book Time sessions, Stay and Play sessions, Christmas Craft afternoon;
- ensuring parents/carers are informed about the curriculum and school life through regular newsletters and daily message boards;
- there is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. 'Celebrations of Achievement' are shared with parents and parents are invited to contribute to the book.
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Reception year;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teachers acts as 'Key Person' to all children in Reception and in Nursery the teacher and support assistants fulfil this role. In the 2 year old provision, children are allocated a specific 'key worker'.

Enabling Environments

At St Michael's Community Academy 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.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS consists of 'Long Term Learning Environment' area plans that reflect how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice. Short term planning starts with observing children in order to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. The staff use the children's interests to plan for themes. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation and engagement.

The planning objectives within the EYFS are taken from the 'Development Matters' framework. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. In the 2 year old setting, evidence is collated in a Personal Learning Journey Book. Photographs, post-it notes, wow pieces of work are displayed in individual books. Observations in Reception and Nursery are recorded electronically on Learning Book. Evidence is gathered and referenced to areas of learning. Learning Book also gives parents the visibility they need to support their child's education beyond the classroom. By seeing what their child does, how they learn and what they do day-to-day, partnerships with parents are made stronger. Making comments and contributing observations from home improves and strengthens engagement. At the end of their Reception year the children's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the all 17 Early Learning Goals.

The Learning Environment

All EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The rooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS has its own enclosed outdoor area. The free flow between inside and the outside has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

Learning and Development

At St Michael's Community Academy we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early year's settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected and are embedded in our Continuous Provision.

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.

Prime Areas:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics

- Knowledge of the world
- Expressive arts and design

We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

“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.”

Early Years Statutory Framework, 2012

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS team to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The Principal and Vice Principal will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the Senior Leadership Team, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.