



St Michael with St Thomas C of E Primary School



EYFS POLICY

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Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five.

At St Michael with St Thomas CE Primary School, children start reception in the autumn term following their fourth birthday. The reception class at St Michael with St Thomas CE Primary School caters for 30 children and children enter from a range of pre school settings.

The reception class follows the statutory framework for the EYFS, working towards the early learning goals, which young children should achieve by the end of the academic year in which they reach the age of 5.

Statement of school aims for foundation stage

These aims embrace the principles for early year's education which are set out in the statutory framework for the early year's foundation stage.

- Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know that provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The (EYFS) is the framework that provides that assurance.
- The aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve the 5 Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes of staying safe, keeping healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing by:
 - Setting standards for learning development and care.
 - Providing for equality of opportunity
 - Creating a framework for partnership between parents and professionals
 - Continuously improving quality and consistency
 - Laying a secure foundation for future learning

The Overarching principles of EYFS are:

- Every child is a unique child, who begins learning at birth and can become resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships with their parents and carers and with others, including their key person at their early years setting.
- A positive environment - in which children's experiences are planned to reflect their needs, and help build their confidence, and in which there is a strong partnership between early years practitioners, parents and other professionals - is crucial if children are to fulfil their potential and learn and develop well. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. All areas of learning and development are valued, important and are inter-connected.

Admissions

The school maintains the LA admissions policy for admissions to reception.

Reception

Children are admitted to the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.

Induction

Reception

We have a comprehensive package of Induction for all new starters. In the Autumn term we offer an open evening where parents who are in the decision making process of selecting a school for their child for the following September can visit. There is a presentation about the EYFS in our school and provides an opportunity to ask any questions they might have. During the Summer Term, prior to entry to reception, parents are invited to an intake meeting to meet staff and find out about the routines, curriculum and organisation. Within the summer term, reception staff will have the opportunity to meet and work with the new intake children in the reception setting to support a positive transition. Children will visit and become familiar with the staff, reception classroom and outdoor learning environment. We also hold a 'Teddy Bear's Picnic' where parents/ carers attend with children and staff.

Families are offered a school interview in reception prior to their child's start date in September. A school prospectus is given to each child/family.

Reception children are admitted on a part time basis for their first week, building up to full days in school. From the second week children attend full time.

Organisation of the day

Reception Class

8.50am - 12noon

lunch 12noon - 12.45pm

12.45pm - 3.00pm

The timetable is flexible. A carefully planned programme of continuous provision as well as focused activities ensures a balanced curriculum of child-initiated and adult-led activities. Children engage with a range of 'challenges' during the week to enhance their learning experiences.

As the year progresses and children develop the focus moves from a mainly play based curriculum with some adult led sessions, to more adult input and independent challenges and tasks to be completed. These adult planned tasks are differentiated to ensure all pupils make the maximum amount of progress.

Promoting equality of access and opportunity

Equal opportunities are provided for all children and adults in the school. The children are encouraged to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and to understand, value and

respect all other cultures and beliefs as well as differences in race, gender, class, religion, ability and disability of those in the immediate and wider environment.

Safeguarding

To help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, each child is assigned a key worker. The key worker helps the child become familiar with the setting, develops a bond with the child through small group and focused activities, and offers a settled relationship.

Mobile phones and cameras

School cameras, iPads and video cameras are used by staff and children for the purposes of teaching, learning and assessment. Only school owned devices are permitted to be used during school hours by staff. These devices are not removed from the school premises.

All staff have received guidance on appropriate use of the internet and e-mail, including social networking sites and media.

Children with special educational needs

At St Michael with St Thomas CE School, practitioners plan for each child's individual needs and requirements, including those who need additional support or have particular needs or disabilities.

The focus is on removing barriers to learning for children where these already exist, and on preventing learning difficulties from developing.

Parents as partners

At St Michael with St Thomas School, we recognise parents as children's first and most important educators. We aim to work in partnership with parents to enhance children's development and learning throughout the foundation stage.

This successful partnership will require a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise, and we ask for parents support in attaining this.

Regular sessions are organised where parents are invited to work alongside their child in school e.g. Stay & Play and Family Learning.

Parents are asked to contribute to their child's ongoing assessment by completing 'wow' slips of new skills observed at home.

Parents are kept up to date with learning undertaken in school and topics covered by a weekly newsletter - 'Reception Reporter' and regular updates on Twitter.

Food and Drink

Children are offered a healthy daily snack each morning in Reception and are given a piece of fruit each afternoon. All children are also entitled to subsidised daily milk, and fresh, cool water is always available.

The Learning Environment

The learning environment is the physical space where children spend their time. It includes the classroom, corridors, washrooms, entrance area, cloakrooms, shared area, displays and outdoor areas.

The classroom learning environment is organised into areas which encourage and support play, interaction and learning. The resources are organised so that children can access and put them away independently. In addition, there are a variety of spaces where children can be physically active or quiet, for example looking at books or dancing. There are also areas with materials to investigate and to build; places where sand, water, playdough or other materials are available and places where children can share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through imaginative and role play activities.

The areas and their organisation are flexible and may be changed to reflect the focus of the curriculum, children's needs or interests.

Areas of Learning and Early Learning Goals

The EYFS is organised into seven areas of learning and development that provide the framework for the EYFS curriculum. Three areas are particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn and to thrive. These three areas, known as the *prime areas*, are:

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

Children are also supported in four further *specific areas* of learning and development, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

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

These areas are equally important and depend on one another to support a holistic approach to child development. All areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities.

The early learning goals are the knowledge skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the end of the foundation stage. They provide the basis for planning throughout the EYFS, laying secure foundations for future learning.

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and

interactive, and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children are also helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to personal hygiene and food.

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and to develop their confidence fluency and skills in expressing themselves.

Literacy development involves encouraging children to read and write, both through listening to others reading, and being encouraged to begin to read and write themselves. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials - books, poems, and other written materials, to ignite their interest.

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to practise and improve their skills in counting, number, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design involves supporting children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Planning the curriculum

Early years objectives are used to promote children's progress towards, and where appropriate beyond, the early learning goals. The curriculum planning framework provides a model for delivering these early learning objectives through well planned, high quality, appropriately play based provision.

Long term planning provides an overview of learning objectives highlighting those regularly promoted through continuous provision and adult lead activities.

Teaching and learning are regularly evaluated so that objectives can be revisited if necessary. Long term plans also include provision area plans that identify learning objectives and opportunities in each provision area. These also include details of resources, organisation, role of the adult and examples of spontaneous play likely to be observed.

Short term planning covers a period of one week and outlines activities on a daily basis. Learning objectives are taken from Development Matters, and the focus for weekly planning is informed by observation and assessment of the children and by evaluation of the previous week's experiences.

This planning system provides opportunities to revisit reinforce and consolidate learning objectives in lots of different ways in response to children's interests and needs.

Weekly plans outline in detail the activities and experiences which adults will initiate to focus on specific learning objectives, as well as observation and assessment foci and opportunities.

Short term planning is flexible and adapted according to immediate outcomes. Provision is evaluated by all practitioners and next steps identified.

Observation and Assessment

At St Michael with St Thomas we recognise the value of observation and assessment to:

- Identify children's unique characteristics of effective learning
- Provide insight into children's interests, achievements and challenges in learning.
- Effectively plan for the next steps in learning and teaching
- Group children for particular interests, activities and experiences
- Plan a curriculum that meets the needs of all the children
- Plan for continuity and progression

To help us understand children's learning we need to know:

- What they have learned so far
- What they know, understand and can do
- What attitudes and opinions they have
- What likes and interests they have
- The ways in which they learn best
- The context in which they learn best
- Where they are in the learning process

We can observe by:

- Listening to children and watching how they play and learn
- Interacting with them
- Questioning them
- Posing problems for them to consider to extend their thinking
- Collecting photographing and annotating their work

In the foundation stage we use:

- Informal observations
2-simple profile builder, photographs, annotated work
- Planned observations
Focusing on a particular child, learning objective or area of provision
- Analysis of observations
Through discussion, next steps noted on observation sheets, completion of assessment profiles including the EYFS profile, Learning Journey files.