Bollington St. John’s Church of England

Primary School



*Where talent grows*

Head Teacher: Mrs M. Walker

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*“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord”*

***Colossians 3:23***

**Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy**

**1. Vision**

Through a positive caring environment, we provide the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential. We embrace Christian values and ensure all children are ready for their next steps.

Within this document, the term Early Years is used to describe children within the Reception Class.

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. 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.

The Reception year must provide every child with a feeling of security, being valued and the confidence to explore new learning. The Reception year is unique in that it can set the tone for later school life.

The EYFS is based on four overarching principles:

* 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; and
* Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

**2. Aims**

When we succeed in giving every child the best start in the early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow. *Development Matters, 2020.*

We aim to focus on the seven key features of effective practice as set out in the Development Matters. These include:

1. The best for every child

2. High quality care

3. The curriculum: what we want children to learn

4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn

5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt

6. Self-regulation and executive function

7. Partnership with parents

We aim to fulfil these areas by:

* Ensuring that all children feel included, secure and valued
* Providing a relevant curriculum with tasks that make sense to the children, and are both practical and purposeful
* Providing opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that children plan or initiate themselves. Practitioners must consider the individual needs and interests of each child, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience in all areas of learning and development
* Acknowledging the holistic nature of young children’s learning and natural links will be made between different areas of the curriculum, with the emphasis on learning through play and the importance of developing speaking and listening skills
* Creating a learning environment that develops children’s imagination and encourages children to explore and express their ideas and feelings
* Responding to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding development through positive interaction
* Involving parents and carers

**3. Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2/).

**4. Structure of the EYFS**

Our EYFS classroom has places for 15 Reception children.

The organisation of the classroom reflects the importance that is placed on children learning through play and first-hand experience, developing independence and having opportunities to initiate their own activities.

The Reception class provides the following areas:

* Small world area for retelling stories
* Role play area
* Large and small construction
* Sand and water
* Book corner with a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books
* Writing table with a range of writing resources
* Making area with access to a choice of natural and man-made resources
* IPad where appropriate
* Interactive whiteboard
* Malleable materials
* Musical instruments
* Painting and creative equipment
* Maths games and equipment
* Outside classroom – a safe, fenced area including role-play posts, giant sand pit, den, outdoor chalkboard, planting equipment, dig pit, storytelling throne, water wall and tray

The Reception class also has a set of boots and waterproof clothing in order to make full use of the outside classroom, school field and walks to the on-site woodland area.

Use of the wider school:

* The Reception class uses the hall for dance, drama, physical education and assemblies
* Use of outside field, playground, woodland area, stage and climbing equipment
* The kitchen for a range of cooking activities
* The laptop trolley for use in classrooms
* Large range of musical instruments
* Library
* Stage area for whole class sessions or larger scale activities

**4.1 Induction Process**

We have close links with Allsorts Preschool on site, as well as the 4 other local preschools. We share good practice through regular contact and visits. The Reception teacher will visit all preschools to meet the children, play alongside them indoors and outdoors and speak with key workers during the final half term.

The children due to attend in September are then invited to visit the Reception class to join in with play and share stories and songs for several sessions towards the end of the Summer Term.

Any transition meetings to discuss children’s transition records are held during the summer term and may involve the preschool keyworkers as well as parents and carers.

In July, each child is sent an introduction pack that includes a golden ticket, inviting them to their starter sessions, a photo album of the school and all staff and a welcome letter from the Reception teacher. This is addressed to the children as we feel that it is important that each child feels welcomed and involved in the transition process.

Also in July, a meeting is held by the Headteacher and Reception teacher to introduce parents/carers to the school, the Reception procedures and curriculum. Families are given a school prospectus which outlines the curriculum and school routines, along with a document pack to be completed and returned to school.

When school starts in September, all children are invited to start school fulltime but with close consultation with families about how their child is settling in to school life and to ensure that children are not becoming over tired in those first weeks.

Reception children are introduced to the life of the wider school gently as they are ready. Lunchtime play is separate in the first term, allowing the children to settle with their classmates in a quiet atmosphere, building to full participation when the individual cohort is ready. The process is the same for good work assemblies, building up to full participation by the end of the first term.

On starting school, each child will have a Year 6 buddy who will take special care of them during play time and when they first arrive at school; this buddy will also read with their partnered child on a weekly basis.

**5. Curriculum**

The curriculum for the Early Years forms the first stage of our Whole School Curriculum. It covers children in the Reception Class.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must provide a framework for planning, teaching and assessing in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are inter-connected.

The three prime areas are:

* Communication and Language – children will be given lots of opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; to speak and listen in a range of situations.
* Physical Development – children will be provided with opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children will be taught the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food and hygiene.
* Personal, Social and Emotional Development – help children develop a positive sense of themselves and others; forming positive relationships and develop respect for others; develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and have confidence in their own abilities.

There are also four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

* Literacy – Children will be taught to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will understand what has been read to them and anticipate key events in stories; they will be introduced to a world of rich vocabulary and will be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest.
* Mathematics – children will be provided with opportunities to explore numerical pattern and to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.
* Understanding the World – Children will make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places and the environment.
* Expressive Arts and Design – Children will explore and play with a 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.

**5.1 Planning**

The curriculum is planned through a series of umbrella themes that we have carefully selected to give a rich and varied content. We consider the personal, social and emotional needs of the children as they start school, as well as including seasons, global issues and festivals to our long term planning.

We use Kapow to help plan creative and engaging lessons for our children; this enables staff to ensure a clear progression of skills and knowledge that flows well into the National Curriculum in Year One.

On a day-to-day basis, our planning reflects and responds to the children’s interests and abilities; we believe it is important to tailor the content and delivery to meet the needs of each cohort.

**5.2 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 will respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As the 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.

**6. Assessment**

As the children enter Reception in September we will spend the majority of our time getting to know our new learners through conversation, questioning and involved play. We will carry out the statuary Baseline assessment (RBA) during the first 4 weeks of the autumn term.

“The purpose of the reception baseline assessment is to provide an on-entry assessment of pupil attainment to be used as a starting point from which a cohort-level progress measure to the end of key stage 2 (KS2) can be created.” *Assessment Framework, March 2020.*

The Reception teacher or the Headteacher will carry out each baseline assessment in a quiet space using the appropriate resources. The assessment will be very informal for each child, more like a 1:1 play session.

**6.1 Monitoring and Evaluation**

Over the course of the year, the Reception teacher will closely monitor the progress and attainment of each child; this will occur primarily through interacting and observing the children as they engage in everyday activities, events and experiences and demonstrate their specific skills, knowledge and understanding.

Reliable and accurate assessment at the end of the EYFS is underpinned by the following principles:

• Assessment is based primarily on the practitioner’s knowledge of the child – knowledge is gained predominantly from observation and interaction in a range of daily activities and events

• Responsible pedagogy must be in place so that the provision enables each child to demonstrate their learning and development fully

• Embedded learning is identified by assessing what a child can do consistently and independently in a range of everyday situations

• An effective assessment presents a holistic view of a child’s learning and development

• Accurate assessments take account of contributions from a range of perspectives including the child, their parents and other relevant adults Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, 2021.

**6.2 Characteristics of Effective Learning**

Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL) are a revived element in the current Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS). CoEL advocate that in planning and guiding children’s activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn, and then reflect these in their practice. A child’s individual learning characteristic will determine the way we respond to both the teaching and learning taking place in the environment.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning identified by the EYFS are:

* **Playing and exploring**- children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’;
* **Active learning**- children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
* **Creating and thinking critically**- children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

**6.3 End of Year Assessment**

The statutory EYFS framework requires the EYFS profile assessment to be carried out in the final term of the year in which a child reaches age 5.

The main purpose of the EYFS profile is to provide a reliable, valid and accurate assessment of individual children at the end of the EYFS against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

The EYFS profile data is used to:

• Inform parents about their child’s development against the ELGs and the characteristics of their learning

• Support a smooth transition to KS1 by informing the professional dialogue between EYFS and KS1 teachers

• Help year 1 teachers plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children

**7. Working with parents**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and families. Families are kept up to date with their child’s progress and development at parent’s evenings and planned meetings where appropriate. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide families with a well-rounded picture of their child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person (the Reception teacher) who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports families in guiding their child’s development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

**8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general by talking to children about:

* The effects of eating too many sweet things
* The importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

**9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Governing Board every year.

Date: November 2023