



Early Years

STATUTORY POLICY

School Mission Statement

"...if you have faith as small as a mustard seed...nothing will be impossible."

(Matthew: 17 v20)

VISION STATEMENT:

Our vision is to put *God* and *Family* at the heart of all we do. As a *nurturing* community, we use the parable of The Mustard Seed "*...if you have faith as small as a mustard seed...nothing will be impossible.*" (Matthew: 17 v20) This guides the way we value and treat all members of our school community. Through our pastoral care and our rich curriculum experiences we provide a safe and dynamic learning environment in which all can flourish.

To grow in: Faith, Love, Compassion, Kindness, Respect & Forgiveness

Our six Christian Values are at the heart of our vision. Every day we aspire to grow in **Faith, Love, Compassion, Kindness, Respect and Forgiveness**, so that our school family may experience the joy and hope of "**life in all its fullness**" (John: 10 v10)

Review every 2 years	
Reviewed: Dec. 2020	Next review: 2022

Your child's first year at in Reception/Early Years

Aims

- To make the transition from pre-school to school a positive experience
- To promote parents as partners in their child's education
- To develop each child's personal, social and emotional well-being by providing a safe and happy environment with an inclusive ethos
- To encourage a positive attitude to learning by providing a well-planned and stimulating environment where purposeful teaching and learning opportunities can take place
- To provide a carefully structured curriculum which builds on what your child already knows and can do
- To provide an appropriate balance between teacher directed, teacher initiated and child initiated activities enabling your child to become an independent, active learner

Transition

Reception teachers have the opportunity to meet with all nursery leaders in the term prior to your child starting primary school. The children will have an opportunity to spend time a half day in school in July giving them the opportunity to become familiar with the environment and the staff. There will be further play and stay sessions in September as well as home visits.

Information gathered from nursery and parents, as well as any other agencies involved with your child, will enable a smooth transition to our school.

Curriculum and Environment

In Reception, we will provide the children with a broad education which will underpin all future learning. It is the final year of the Foundation Stage Curriculum, which begins at the age of three, when many children start playschool or nursery. The EYFS is about developing key learning skills, such as listening, speaking, concentration, persistence and learning to work together and co-operate with other children. It is also about developing early communication, literacy and numeracy skills that will prepare children for work in Year 1 and beyond.

The EYFS has seven areas of learning and development. There are three "prime" areas. These are:

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

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

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

The seven areas help us plan the learning environment, activities and experiences, and provide a framework for the early year's curriculum. The seven areas all hold equal importance and we do not split all learning into separate areas. One experience may provide children with opportunities to develop a number of skills and concepts across several areas of learning; for example, children building with blocks may co-operate in carrying the heavy and large blocks, negotiate where is the best place to put them, compare the weight and dimensions of different blocks, and act out an imaginary scene. Therefore they may be developing language, maths, physical, and personal and social skills through this one activity.

Well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. Much of what we do in Reception is based through structured play, so do not be alarmed if your child comes home and says they have been playing all day! Children of this age do not distinguish between play and learning, so neither do we.

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The 'outdoor classroom' is just as important as the indoor classroom. We are continually developing our outdoor area so that there are even more opportunities for children to access all seven areas of the curriculum outside as well as inside. Physical play, such as throwing, catching and skipping, is important in itself, as it helps to develop children's co-ordination and large muscles, which are needed for writing.

Through play the children can:

- Explore learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, alongside or co-operate with others as they talk and rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems

We have included some ideas to help you develop these areas of learning with your child at home. Many of the things we know you will already do but we hope it will remind you how important those 'normal' things you do impact on your child's learning. Don't forget how important you are to your child's education. You are his/her first and most important teacher. At school we build on all the good work you have already done.

Personal Social and Emotional Development

This is the most important area of learning for your child as it is about;

- their wellbeing, knowing who they are and feeling good about themselves
- them developing respect for others, learning how to behave appropriately and how to get on with others
- learning how to take part and work as a group, and take turns and share
- developing independence in selecting activities and resources.

Communication Language and Literacy

Speaking and listening are the most important skills your child needs to learn before they are ready to learn to read and write. In Reception the children are given many opportunities to;

- talk to adults and other children through play based activities.
- articulate their ideas and organise their thoughts using their wider vocabulary
- share their ideas with the class or in smaller groups while other children learn to listen and respect each other's views

Reading Children become reader through enjoying books and listening to stories, rhymes and songs.

- Much of the reading that your child will be doing in the first term in school will happen spontaneously through sharing stories with adults either 1:1 or in a small group.
- We model pointing to the words as we read and discussing the pictures, predicting what might happen.

How can you help at home?

- Allow your child to dress themselves
- Teach them how to put their coat on and do it up
- Train your child to use the toilet on their own, to flush it afterwards and wash their hands
- Teach him/her how to use a knife and fork
- Ask him/her to put their toys away by themselves. At school they will always be expected to tidy up their things
- Give him/her opportunities to play with other children and learn to share and take turns.



How can you help at home?

- Talk to your child and explain things to answer their never ending questions! Talk about what you see when you are out.
- Take turns in conversations during mealtimes or at another quiet family time
- Encourage your child to listen to others and concentrate for short periods
- Encourage them to look at you when you speak. Play some simple memory games like "I went shopping and bought....." to encourage them to remember what you have said.
- let your child see you reading – they will want to do what you do!
- read to your child every day. make story time a fun, quiet and cuddly time of the day.
- talk about the pictures in the stories – what do they think will happen, what are the characters like, did they like the story and why.



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Writing The initial writing that your child will be doing in school will happen through play and role play. Your child may pretend to be a shopkeeper, a waiter, doctor etc and through their play they may need to write lists, prescriptions, letters and phone messages, whilst having fun.

- let your child see you writing
- give your child big sheets of paper, crayons, pens, paints and chalks
- let them use play-dough or plasticene to develop the muscles in their fingers



Don't be in a hurry for your child to write as they need to be physically and emotionally ready before this happens. We want your child to feel confident and achieve success, so we provide them with activities and experiences which are the building blocks for reading and writing.

Mathematical development

This involves two areas; **number and calculations** and **shape, space and measure**. In Reception we have a variety of resources to develop these skills;

- counting out toys, pieces of fruit, number of children lined up
- learning number rhymes and songs
- building models and making patterns with 2d and 3d shapes
- experimenting with the sand, water and garden equipment
- cooking to learn about the practicality of weighing and counting

Understanding of the world

We aim to provide experiences which will specifically develop the children's investigative skills, including the exploration of ICT;

- termly topics which the children are involved in choosing
- exploring the outdoor area which the children have regular access to.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creative activities develop the whole child as they can use their imagination to create pictures, models and music.

Children have opportunities to choose many things including;

- junk modelling
- role play
- large and small drawings; chalks, pens, crayons, paints
- musical instruments

Physical Development

It is important that young children are active.

- Children have access to wheeled toys, sports equipment and are encouraged to develop balance and an awareness of safety.
- Fine motor skills are developed through threading, drawing, painting and using scissors to strengthen muscles in their hands and fingers.

How can you help at home?

- Let your child help with sorting and matching activities, like pairing socks and laying the table.
- Count whenever you can; steps toys, people, food...
- sing songs and rhymes which involve numbers
- let your child handle money and name the coins when you go shopping
- involve them when your cooking
- use language such as more, less, fewer, most, longer, shorter



How can you help at home?

- talk about the weather
- talk about how things grow and change, notice seasonal changes
- look for minibeasts and observe them
- teach your child about healthy foods and how to keep safe
- talk about things that happened when you were a child and look at old family photos



How can you help at home?

- give your child large sheets of paper and a variety of drawing tools
- draw with them, talking about what you are doing, shapes you have drawn, colours you have chosen
- provide them with plastic scissors to cut or snip
- let your child dress up and pretend to be another character
- sing songs and rhymes together



How can you help at home?

- take your child on regular walks to the park or beach
- encourage them to ride a bike or scooter
- play ball games with them; roll, kick, throw and catch
- make models together using scissors and collage

