

FOUNDED 1789



'Learning for life with God as our guide'

St Mary's CEP (VA) School, Dover

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date: October 2019

Reviewed and Ratified by: Governing body on 27th November 2019

Review Date: October 2024

Signed: _____ Elizabeth Fisher, Chair of Governors

Signed: _____ Helen Comfort, Executive Headteacher



ST MARY'S Church of England Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their full 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.'

(Early Years Foundation Stage 2012)

Equality

We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish equality for all pupils, staff, other members of the school community and service users regardless of their ethnicity, gender disability, sexual orientation, age or beliefs as defined within existing equalities legislation.

Aims

At St. Mary's we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At St Mary's we aim to:

- provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development
- provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs
- use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- enable choice and decision-making, encouraging children to think critically fostering independence and self confidence
- work in partnership with parents/guardians and value their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable program of learning and development
- provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive rather than parallel
- provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. A Unique Child:

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at St Mary's are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school and we believe that all our children should be given every opportunity to be successful. We aim to do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all

social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic background.

At St Mary's we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

2. Positive Relationships:

At St Mary's 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.

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. When the children start school we aim to form meaningful relationships with children and parents quickly and effectively. We hope that the setting is a place where parents feel comfortable to ask questions share feelings, ideas and opinions. We recognise that we should celebrate families and diversity. We understand that the children are at different stages within the Early Years Foundation Stage and value parent's perceptions of the setting. With the guidance of the EYFS framework we aim to make them feel involved as partners in learning.

We do this by:

- Providing a range of activities to enable a smooth transition from pre-school and successful induction to school.
- Offering informal and formal times to talk and provide parents with information about their child's progress, and encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher about any concerns they may have.
- Welcoming the children and parents each morning. We encourage parents/carers to help settle their child, to explore the workshop areas and challenges set up and to spend time in the reading area choosing books together.
- Providing contact books for parents and child to record special times and achievements at home, which they can share in school.
- Providing events and workshops that offer parents the opportunity to find out more about the teaching and learning in the Reception Year at St Mary's.
- Keeping parents informed through displays, notice boards, newsletters and the school website.

3. Enabling Environments:

At St. Mary's we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence. Activities are planned for both the inside and outside. The rooms are set up in learning area workshops, which encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Here children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Early Years have their own enclosed outdoor classroom. This has a positive effect on the children's development; as 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. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

4. Learning and Development:

At St Mary's school we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected. We aim to deliver all the areas of learning through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities that encompass the three main characteristics of learning: Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically.

The seven areas of learning and development consist of:

The Three Prime Areas

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)
- Physical Development (PD)
- Communication and Language (CL)

The Four Specific Areas

- Literacy (L)
- Mathematics (M)
- Understanding The World (UW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

At St. Mary's we embrace play and active learning; and understand that it sits at the heart of the Learning and Development theme in the EYFS framework.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They learn how to build resilience in controlled and safe situations.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows the achievements, interests and needs of the children, following careful observation of each child and discussions with the parents of the children. Planning is based around our whole school termly topics, which are then used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning; adapting it in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to inform future planning. Observations are recorded in a variety of ways and are used to inform next steps to learning. Within the final term of the EYFS we provide parents with a written profile, reporting on their child's progress against the Early Learning Goals. The parents are given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the teacher. The Year 1 teacher will also receive a copy of the profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This will assist with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Induction of new children.

All new children will spend two afternoons in school prior to starting in September. These taster sessions will take place in the latter part of Term 6. Parents are encouraged to stay if they wish until their child feels secure and happy. During these taster sessions children are able to become familiarised with both the indoor and outdoor classrooms, and meet the class teacher and teaching assistants. Parents are also invited to attend an open evening hosted by the Class Teacher, Executive Headteacher and Head of School.

St Mary's school feeds from many nursery and playgroups. The EYFS lead teacher will visit pre-school settings to see the children in familiar surroundings and to talk with their current teachers. The SENCO or EYFS lead teacher will always visit any child with a pre-school statement or a special need identified by the pre-school panel to discuss the child's exact needs.

Last Reviewed October 2019 by Samantha Riley
(Early Years Foundation Stage Lead Teacher)