



St Alphege CE Infant School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Implemented: February 2015

Date of last review: February 2015

Date of next review: February 2016

Staff Responsible: PCT

Mission Statement

To build on the school motto..."Learning to Live...Loving to Learn..."

To inspire and continue to nurture a love of learning, where everyone's achievements are valued and enhanced through links with one another, families and opportunities beyond the school.

Aims

At St Alphege CE Infant School and Sunbeams Nursery our aim is to provide a secure and caring learning environment in which all children feel eager and motivated to learn. It is one which seeks to promote the developing skills, concepts, confidence and independence of the individual child. We aim to provide effective provision which will enable all children to achieve to their full potential.

We uphold the principles of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving well-being. These provide the basis for all teaching and learning opportunities within the Foundation Stage environment.

Equally, as practitioners, we adhere to and value the principles of the Statutory Framework and the EYFS Guidance (2012) and aim to provide children with the opportunities to:

- Use their senses as a means of exploring the world
- Resolve conflicts, both intellectually and socially
- Learn through direct experience
- Develop confidence in their own ability to make sense of the world
- Extend skills/abilities by testing them out in a range of situations
- Initiate, carry out and review their own projects
- Draw on a range of resources to achieve their intentions, developing a flexible and open-ended approach to problems
- Take risks and learn from mistakes
- Progress by building on existing knowledge and understanding
- Express ideas and feelings
- Enjoy fun and laughter with others
- Recreate what they have felt and experienced

The Early Years Guidance for The Foundation Stage

From September 2012 the reviewed Foundation Stage Framework has provided the curriculum for all practitioners working with children from birth to the end of Reception year or until the early learning goals are completed. This guidance is inclusive of all practitioners working within the foundation stage.

The Foundation Stage is valued as a stage in its own right and should not be seen as preparation for Key Stage 1. The Foundation Stage establishes expectations for most children to achieve by the end of the Reception Year.

At St Alphege we work within the four principles of the EYFS:

1. A unique Child – every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
2. Positive Relationships – children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or key person
3. Enabling Environments – the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning
4. Learning and Development – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

These four guiding themes work together in an holistic manner to underpin our high quality delivery of the EYFS Curriculum.

Inclusive Practice

We aim to ensure that all children should be guaranteed equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, culture, class or disability. All resources are carefully selected to reflect positive images of all groups. Our planning aims to foster an appreciation of each other’s cultures and beliefs along with the promotion of a healthy and positive self-image. All practitioners will aim to avoid stereotypical language, actions and situations.

Health, Wellbeing and Safety

We aim to provide a happy, stimulating environment where the children’s wellbeing and safety is paramount; incorporating good quality care and consistency. We follow the Leuven Scale to monitor the child’s well-being and involvement levels.

It is the class teacher’s role to ensure that all new entrants are made aware of important issues such as fire drills, first aid and safety rules. Extra assistance may be needed for some children but all practitioners should always seek to promote developing the children’s independence. Many issues will be approached through the topic activities during the Reception year.

Parents as Partners.

We value the contributions of parents as the child's first and most enduring educator. Opportunities are provided daily for liaison if necessary. The setting values parental contribution and aims to work in partnership to maximise the child's physical, intellectual, emotional and social development.

Induction

The variety of events listed below facilitates a strong foundation to develop a positive partnership between parents/carers and practitioners

'Stay and Play' Sessions

Children and parents are invited into school for several informal 'stay and play' sessions in the term before children start school. At the end of this term children and parents are invited to a 'picnic'. These sessions provide opportunities for children to become familiar with us and for us to get to know the children better also.

New Parent Evening

You will receive a very warm welcome from our Early Years Team, as well as our chair of Governors and Head Teacher. You will have an opportunity to meet the School Inclusion manager and there will be a variety of 'stations' set up around the hall providing any information you may require. Following this, there is a chance to sign-up for a consultation with your child's class teacher in September, as well as an opportunity to meet them informally, together with our classroom assistants and Head Teacher.

Starting School Meetings

Parents are invited to a consultation with the class teacher to talk about their child in some depth. This will help inform planning for next steps in the child's learning and the help to make initial entries on the Foundation Stage Profile. During the consultation, teachers will complete a questionnaire which will identify your child's strengths, needs, concerns, specific abilities and other general information.

Curriculum Workshops

We endeavour to provide opportunities during the Reception Year for parents or carers to be involved actively in classroom activities. Special days, linked to topics or areas of development will be arranged in order that parents or carers can experience 'play' alongside their child within the school setting. Through these sessions and other information workshops we will explain and demonstrate the planning, learning and assessment that takes place in the Early years at St Alphege.

Celebration Assemblies

Approximately each term you will be invited into school to find out what the children have been learning, by coming along to one of our Celebration Assemblies. The children will have the opportunity to share their achievements with you.

The Reception Year at St Alphege CE Infants

Entry Assessments

Baseline

In 2016 an Early years Baseline assessment will form a guide to your child's educational starting points as they enter their reception year. In 2015 we are trialling this system using a screen recommended by the Local Authority called Early Excellence.

Your will be given information about this assessment for your child once it is completed, and next steps for us to work on together to ensure that your child progresses well from these starting points.

Assessments in Early Years

When your child starts here at St Alphege or Sunbeams , teachers and teaching assistants within the Foundation Stage focus on ensuring that each child feels secure, safe, happy and stimulated within their new setting. Observational, audio and photographic evidence can then be collated to create an up to date accurate picture of the stage each child is presently at in their learning. Ongoing assessments inform planning, resourcing and target setting for individual children.

General Planning

We aim to provide children with a broad and balanced curriculum that is carefully matched to their needs. When planning the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, practitioners will take into account the different strategies for teaching and learning within the Foundation Stage.

Learning

Play-based activities are at the heart of learning in the Foundation Stage. As the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage (QCA 22000 p20) states:

'Learning for young children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Foundation Stage many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through play and talking'.

At St Alphege we believe that well-planned play is the key to how young children learn. Providing children with opportunities to take part in a variety of play-based

activities is at the core of our teaching. We provide a balance between the following:

Child Initiated Activities: where the child makes choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her own outcomes for learning. Skilful adult interaction supports and extends play to enable the child to make progress.

Adult Initiated Activities: experiences where the practitioner provides the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning. These experiences may not always require the direct involvement of an adult.

Adult Directed Activities: experiences which are planned and supported by practitioners and which aim to meet specific learning outcomes.

All pupils are admitted to school in accordance with the Kent County Council Admissions Policy. However, we do take into consideration a child's individual needs to decide when the most appropriate time for them to begin full time education is.

Transfer information

Close links have been made with the other local Pre-Schools. The Early Years team visit Sunbeams and other feeder nurseries and playgroups during the term before the children start school. They meet the new children and liaise with their teachers and key workers. Where this is not possible, a telephone conversation takes place. This enables us to gain invaluable insight into the needs of the children and families who are to become part of our school.

The Preschool teacher is also asked to provide the Record of Transfer for each child. This ensures progression and continuity in learning throughout the child's Foundation Stage. This information is used to inform planning for the next steps in the child's learning and the first entries in the Foundation Stage Profile.

Long and Medium Term Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide a useful tool for planning and assessment and are divided into six curriculum areas:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication, language and literacy
- Problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Creative development

The guidance also identifies 'stages of learning' which state the knowledge, skills and attitudes children need to achieve the Early Learning Goals.

Individual children may be working at different levels within each of the six areas of development. None of these areas of development can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development.

As effective early years practitioners we aim to plan a broad and balanced range of play activities which are suited and carefully matched to the needs of the children in the setting. The Curriculum Guidance is used to support our planning.

At St Alphege and Sunbeams a broad topic is chosen each term which tries to reflect the children's interests. A balance of adult initiated and adult directed activities are often linked to these themes.

Short Term Planning.

Short term plans cover weekly activities. This is where objectives become more focussed and differentiated. The language that is to be promoted is specified along with the role of the adult.

Significant amounts of our timetables are allocated to Child Initiated Activities (CIA). This time is central to an early years setting as it allows children to develop many skills when supported effectively by practitioners. The way in which this cycle of plan-do-review is organised develops over the year. Children are supported by adults in the setting making their choices and understanding the rules and routines of the setting. By the end of Reception the children will be confident in selecting their own resources within the environment. The adults will work alongside the children, interacting, questioning and responding to questions. All of the activities and routines planned aim to reflect the Principles for Early Education as stated in the Foundation Stage Guidance.

Literacy and Numeracy activities occur across the week. The children receive whole class Literacy and Numeracy input. In addition, children receive phonics teaching. Literacy and Numeracy activities are practical and linked to the topic plans for the term.

The early years teaching staff meet regularly to evaluate and plan the framework for teaching for the following weeks work.

Observing Assessing Recording and Reporting

At St Alphege, observation is regarded as a powerful tool for assessment. Practitioners meet regularly to plan and discuss observations made in the setting. These observations are used to plan the next steps in each individual child's development.

Observations and assessments are recorded in order to chart the progress of each individual child and inform the Foundation Stage Profile.

Practitioners may use their observations to target a specific child, group or activity. During Child Initiated Activity (CIA) sessions practitioners will observe a specific child and will be focussed on that child's individual development. These observations will take place daily and staff will keep a record to ensure every child will be observed regularly. Observations evolve over the year focussing on the child's achievement in relation to stages of learning or early learning goals. These observations will be recorded in the teacher's recording system. Other observations and assessments occur during the adult-initiated or adult-directed activities. Practitioners will also note down any other incidental observations that may be significant to particular children's development.

Assessments are made regularly and are recorded against a specific learning objective. The teacher reviews these observations and assessments each week ensuring that each child is being supported and challenged effectively. All observations are collated by the class teacher and next steps for learning identified and fed into planning.

Every term the class teacher will use data collected from observations to inform their tracking data. We analyse the information from this profile to identify areas of strength and gaps in learning for individuals, vulnerable groups, gender and whole class. Information from the profile is to be shared with parents through and at the end of the school year. The class teacher will also complete an end of year report commenting on each area of learning and providing targets for Year 1.

Throughout the year the teacher will collate a record of achievement for each child within the Assessment File. All records are then passed to the year one teacher at a meeting when individual children and their needs can be discussed.

Moderation

It is the responsibility of teachers within the Foundation Stage to follow the principles stated in this policy. Teachers moderate judgments made towards the Foundation Stage Profile at the end of each term and seek opportunities to take part in joint moderation with other schools. Through the year staff from St Alphege meet with other teachers in the Coastal Alliance (group of local schools) to moderate judgments about the children's learning to ensure accuracy and consistency.

Towards the end of the academic year Foundation Stage teachers attend local authority moderation workshops to moderate accuracy of judgments made about children's achievements. Every four years, local authority moderation takes place within the school setting.

Outdoor Learning Policy

Aims

At St Alphege CE Infant School and Sunbeams Nursery our aim is to provide a stimulating, secure and safe outside learning environment where all six areas of Foundation Stage Curriculum are provided for. Children will be encouraged to actively explore the world around them, developing their creativity, independence, thinking skills and ability to solve problems across the curriculum.

Principles

Movement is essential to learning for young children. Through a range of play based curriculum activities in the outside area, children explore and develop further skills that will include coordination, language development, problem solving, social skills, investigation and observation. As children acquire these skills, their sense of well-being, and self confidence increases.

Planning

Planning for the outside reflects the long term and medium term planning and directly links to short term planning and children's interests. The children are given opportunities to visit both the outside and inside areas during child initiated activity. During directed and initiated teaching the outside area is used daily. Resources in the outdoor area are provided to stimulate, challenge and inspire children to engage in learning and provide well for both the planned and unplanned curriculum.

Role of the Adults

Each day the adults provide a starting point or focus, which throughout the week, enables children to explore all areas of learning equally. However, as the children take more ownership of the outdoor environment, they are more involved in the collection and tidying of resources.

During the sessions the adults will:

- Build in the challenge by asking open questions
- Extend talk
- Extend vocabulary/knowledge skills etc
- Challenge
- Add resources
- Demonstrate/model
- Help children see links in learning
- Support and encourage
- Re-direct the play if necessary
- Referee/help children to negotiate
- Supervise/be a safety officer/risk assessor
- Administer first aid
- Counsel when needed

- Observe and assess learning
- Record judgements and plan next steps for learning
- Provide feedback to child/other adults/parents

Assessment

Assessment for learning takes place regularly through observation and assessments of teacher directed and initiated work. Information gained from assessments informs planning.

Summative assessments will support judgements against the Foundation Stage Profile.

Equal Opportunities

The Foundation Stage curriculum is inclusive and facilitates the needs of all children regardless of their age, size, mobility, gender, ethnicity and ability. (This is linked to the school's policies for Equal Opportunities and Inclusion).

Health and Safety

Practitioners are mindful of elements and ensure the children are appropriately dressed and protected. Parents are informed of their responsibilities regarding learning in the outside environment and the provision of appropriate footwear, clothing and sun-creams.

We are fully aware of the responsibility to ensure safe access to the outside and that equipment is regularly maintained. Risk assessments are carried out when necessary, in accordance with guidelines and the outside area is checked before use to ensure safety.

There are clear expectations of positive behaviour. A code of practice for the appropriate use of the environment is negotiated and agreed by adults and children and revisited through the year.

Adults are mindful of the school Health and Safety policy for the moving of equipment.

Adults are encouraged to be vigilant and aware of possible hazards which could affect the children's security and safety.