

Pott Shrigley and Bollington St John's  
Church of England Primary Schools



Sharing our Gifts and Growing our Talents Together

## EYFS Policy

*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to 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. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”*

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

### A Unique Child

At Pott Shrigley and Bollington St John’s Schools, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

#### *Inclusion*

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children across the federation are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our schools.

In our schools we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We 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 backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

### *Welfare*

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (See Federation Safeguarding Policy.)

*"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."*

Across the federation we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

### **Positive Relationships**

At both schools, we recognise that children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

#### *Parents as Partners*

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. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- The teacher offering to visit all children in their pre-school setting prior to their starting school;
- The children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during Transition afternoons;
- Inviting all parents to a new parents open evening during the Summer term before their child starts school;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress at parents evenings but also allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journey' booklets and online profile;
- Arranging a breadth of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Share days, Celebration assemblies, Academy celebrations and Sports Day etc;
- Welcoming and encouraging parents to contribute to their child's online Learning Journal and commenting, asking questions and 'liking' the pictures and observations that the EY staff add on a weekly basis.
- Offering Stay, Play and Pray sessions where parents can join their child in class every month to share in the learning and activities during a Religious Education session.
- Welcoming parents to share their favourite story with the children at our Secret Reader sessions which occur almost every week during the school year.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Teaching Assistant.

### **Enabling Environments**

At Pott Shrigley and Bollington St. John's Schools we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning,

before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

### *Observation, Assessment and Planning*

The EYFS Profile is the national, statutory assessment tool against which teachers record their observations of all children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals, throughout the year, collating them each term and enabling a final assessment to be made at the end of the summer term of Reception. A completed EYFS Profile consists of 20 items of information: the attainment of each child assessed in relation to the 17 ELG descriptors, together with a short narrative describing the child's three characteristics of effective learning.

Assessments will be based primarily on observation of daily activities and events. As practitioners we note in particular the learning which a child demonstrates spontaneously, independently and consistently in a range of contexts, accurate assessment will take account of a range of perspectives including those of the child, parents and other adults who have significant interactions with the child.

For each ELG, practitioners must judge whether a child is meeting the level of development expected at the end of Reception year (expected), exceeding this level (exceeding), or not yet reaching this level (emerging.)

During the first half-term in Reception, the teacher must carry out a national baseline assessment which assesses the ability of each child in a number of key areas. At the Federation we have chosen to use the Early Excellence Baseline Assessment (EExBA which uses a number of statements, based on the Early Years Profile, against which each child is assessed. This forms an 'on entry' baseline for each child which will be used at the end of Key Stage 1 to assess progress. These assessments also allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We share the information contained in the EExBA at the first parental consultation meeting.

The planning within the EYFS follows a long term plan which is based around the IPC topics. The EYFS staff then creates a medium term plan that takes in to consideration the interests of the children. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning; however the teacher may alter the medium term plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's online Learning Journal, Tapestry.

Parents are invited to see how Tapestry works for themselves at the open evening during the Summer term prior to their child starting school. A confidentiality agreement must be signed before any child is added to the Tapestry system.

All parents have a secure login and they can access their child's Journal through an app on their mobile device or a computer at home or school.

The EYFS staff each has a login and as photographs and observations are made, they are uploaded and assessed on a daily basis. The assessments made help to inform planning on a daily and weekly basis as gaps can be planned for and children's learning can be supported or extended as appropriate.

Tapestry is also used to create Next Steps for each child which are shared during parent evening meetings. The EYFS staff share a simplified version of these with the children to ensure they too have an understanding of what direction their learning is going in. We aim to provide a very safe and secure environment where every child recognises that their learning, however small, is valued.

Across the federation, we use the eProfile to keep a track of every child's learning against the 17 ELG descriptors. At the end of the Summer term we then send a summary of the final assessments to the Local Authority (LA). The children's next teacher in Year One will also use this information to make plans for the year ahead, and to decide, in consultation with the EYFS staff, whether to begin to assess against the National Curriculum descriptors or to continue using the EYFS curriculum. This information would be shared during meetings with parents where needed.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and assessment scales. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

### *The Learning Environment*

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and located equipment and resources independently. The EYFS class on the St. John's site has its own enclosed outdoor area and a new, purpose built outdoor classroom which allows children to use the outdoor space for 'messy' play, small world and construction, in all weathers. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children 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.

## Learning and Development

Across the Federation 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.

### *Teaching and Learning Style*

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 or 2. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

### *Play*

*“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.”*

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up 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.

### *Active Learning*

*“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”*

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

### *Creativity and Critical Thinking*

*“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”*

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

### *Areas of Learning*

The National EYFS Curriculum, which precedes the National Curriculum for Key Stages 1-4 (5 to 16 years), consists of seven Areas of Learning:

#### **The prime areas of learning:**

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

#### **The specific areas of learning:**

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

#### **Characteristics of effective learning:**

- playing and exploring
- active learning
- creating and thinking critically

None of these areas of learning and 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. All the areas must be delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. For each area of learning there are statutory Early Learning Goals. These establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. They provide the basis for planning in Reception.

By the end of the year, some children will have exceeded the goals. The majority of children will be at the expected level, achieving the Early Learning Goals, and other children, depending on their individual needs, will be emerging, achieving towards some if not all of the goals – particularly some younger children, some children with learning difficulties and disabilities and some learning English as an additional language.

We use the detailed guidance set out in *The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2014* to assess attainment and progress.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The EYFS coordinator discusses good practice with the practitioners regularly and provides feedback raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and the EYFS coordinator will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Date: June 2016