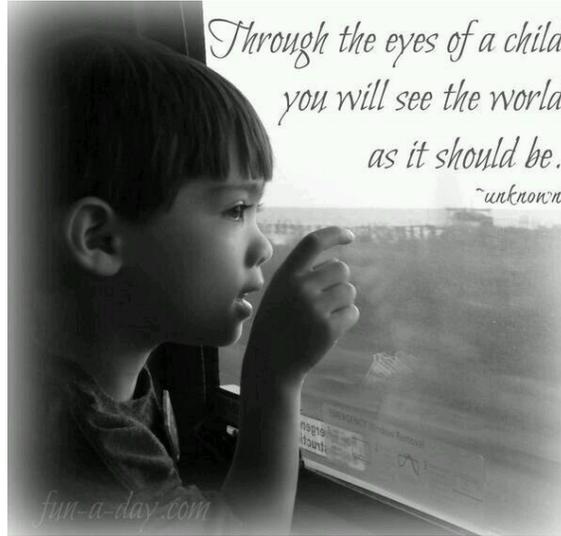


# St. Leonards' Primary School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



### Our Mission Statement

We aim to create a secure and integrated environment, where Nursery and Reception children can become happy, independent learners.

In our setting our central ethos for teaching and learning remains within child development. Therefore, our environments and any practitioner-led learning experiences will reflect the immediate needs of each cohort of children, step by step. As our setting philosophy promotes active, engaging and meaningful play as the main medium for development, our first direction will always be towards this. Children in their formative years need to be using space, holding, carrying and transferring; and above all feel they have the time and freedom to explore indoors and outdoors, talk and interact with their own imaginative play. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year.

### Staffing & Organisation

Early Years at St. Leonard's, consists of a Nursery Class (rising 3-4 year olds) and Reception Class (4-5 year olds). The Nursery is staffed by qualified Level 3 Practitioners. It has 16 places in each morning or afternoon session. The Reception class is staffed by a Teacher and a full time Level 3 EYFS Practitioner.

## **The role of all adults**

This should include:

- The recognition of the importance of the role of all significant adults, teachers, early years' practitioners and parents as partners.
- The understanding of the importance of warm, caring relationships between adult and child, to provide positive and meaningful interactions that enhance self esteem and confidence.
- The encouragement of well- planned quality play by adults who observe, interact and extend the children's activities in a way that positively affects the attitudes of learning that the children develop.
- The provision of an appropriate mix of adult directed and child initiated activities.
- Promoting children's learning through planned experiences that are challenging but achievable.
- Modelling a range of positive behaviours.
- Using language that is rich and grammatically correct to develop children's language.
- Direct teaching of skills and knowledge
- Planning the indoor and outdoor environment to provide a positive context for learning and teaching
- Skilful and well planned observations of children.

## **Confidentiality**

All adults working in the EYFS must understand that all information in the course of employment will be kept confidential. Details of children, families and staff must remain confidential and must not be discussed outside of school (see separate social networking and mobile phone policy).

## **The EYFS is based upon four principles**

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

### **A Unique Child**

At St. Leonard's, 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 at St. Leonard's are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school 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.

For those children with special educational needs, the focus will be on removing barriers for children and on preventing learning difficulties developing. Children's learning difficulties will be identified at an early stage and teaching will respond quickly to areas of difficulty. This will involve working closely with parents and developing an effective strategy to meet these needs. This may involve working with staff from other agencies in drawing up Individual Early Education Plans.

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.

### **Welfare**

"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."

At St. Leonard's we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for The Revised Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. 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.

### **Health and safety**

The school's guidelines on health, medical and safety issues are followed by the EYFS.

Children will only be dismissed to a Parent or Carer at the end of the day unless staff have been notified of any change. The EYFS uses a safeguarding system to ensure the safety of the children if they are collected by an adult unknown to EYFS staff. All children must be handed over personally to their Parent/Carer at the end of the day or to a previously agreed person.

At least one person who has a current Paediatric First Aid Certificate must be on the premises at all times when children are present and must accompany children on outings. In the EYFS, we will continue to complete written risk assessments for any occasion that the children are leaving school premises.

### **First Aid**

- All injuries must be recorded in the class accident record.
- Any head injury must be reported to the class teacher immediately. Any child who has had a head injury must go home with a 'bumped head' form, to alert parents. Any head injury causing concern must be referred to the school office.
- Any personnel dealing with any other first aid must inform the class teacher of the injury and treatment.

## **Positive Relationships**

At St. Leonard'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.

### **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 offers to visit all children in their home setting prior to their starting Nursery/School;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during 'Taster' days and Transition sessions;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- regular parent home links about themes and ideas for activities to share with their child at home;
- both Reception and Nursery have dedicated pages on the school web site, containing parent's information;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Nursery and Reception classes and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journeys';
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which teachers and parents discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their Reception year.

We operate an open door policy where parents can talk with us at the end of the school day whenever possible.

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. We follow the key person approach across all groups of children.

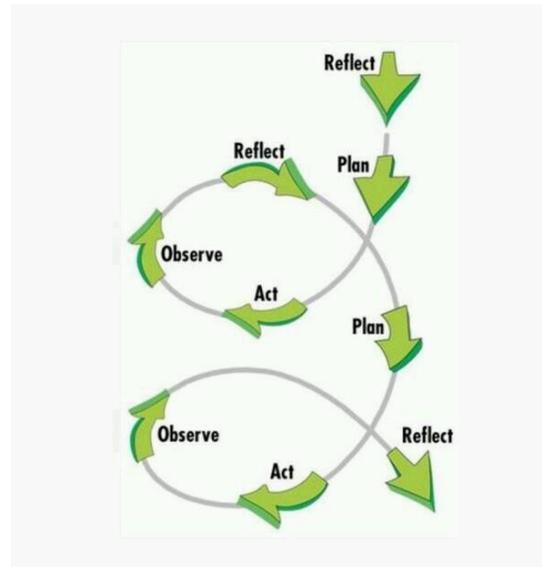
The EYFS Leader takes overall responsibility for all children and staff within the setting as a whole.

## Enabling Environments

At St. Leonards' School 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.

We base our teaching within the Montessori, Waldorf and Reggio Emilia approaches and our environments reflect this.

## Observation, Assessment and Planning



All EYFS staff are responsible for observing individual children's interests, assessing appropriate next steps for the child and implementing them. Ongoing individual planning and next steps are recorded on our Spontaneous Planning sheets. Spontaneous Planning embeds the Observe/Assess/Plan cycle very effectively and ensures staff, are supporting children's individual interests and development in a meaningful way. It informs individual next steps in learning for children, as well as enhancing continuous provision in the learning environment.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. As part of our philosophy of **child-initiated learning**, our **Formative Assessment** informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations, baseline assessment, other focused assessments and conversations with parents.

All adults working in the EYFS are responsible for observing children. Children are observed for levels of well-being and involvement, interests and the Characteristics of Learning. Each child has an individual Learning Journey in which this evidence is stored.

At St. Leonard's all children's learning is recorded within their own learning journal, which covers the 7 areas of learning and 17 Early Learning Goals of the EYFS Profile. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and the Characteristics of Learning. We give a reasonable opportunity for the Parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher. A copy of the Profile report will also be given to the Year 1 teacher. At the end of the Reception year, the EYFS coordinator will spend time moderating with year one for reading, writing and numeracy, as part of our transition.

## The Learning Environment

The EYFS classrooms are 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 locate equipment and resources independently. The areas will include:

- An attractive and comfortable place to read;
- Explorative, sensorial play with a variety of equipment;
- Mathematical and scientific equipment;
- A writing area with a variety of paper and tools to mark make or write;
- Imaginative play areas;
- A variety of creative media such as paint, clay, wood, junk materials;
- Baking materials and equipment;
- Growing things;
- Collections of interesting objects to handle;
- Collections of musical instruments;
- Access to appropriate ICT equipment, as required;
- A variety of outdoor play equipment;

All areas will be attractive and suitably resourced so that children are encouraged to use them and engage in purposeful, challenging activities with or without the presence of an adult.

Resources will be organised in such a way that children are enabled to make informed choices, select independently what they need and take responsibility for clearing away.

Children will be able to relate personally to the resources provided so that they:

- Reflect children's varied home and community experiences;
- Reflect the multi-cultural nature of the local community;
- Avoid gender stereotyping.

Having daily access to the outdoor environment is a priority at St. Leonard's. For many children, it is their preferred space and the EYFS classes have their own enclosed outdoor areas. Great emphasis is placed on ensuring that the outdoor learning environment contributes to all areas of learning. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the chance 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 seven areas of learning. Children have access to the whole learning environment both in and out of doors for a substantial part of each session.

Resources outdoors and indoors are organised similarly to enable children to be independent and take responsibility.

All children are encouraged to take part in the full range of outdoor experiences.

## Learning and Development

At St. Leonard's 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 2. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between practitioners and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that practitioners 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.

## The staff

- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Promote children's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable;
- Teach skills and knowledge;
- Understand that children learn in different ways and at a different pace to each other;
- Use rich and varied language to help children develop linguistic structures for thinking;
- Plan both indoor and outdoor provision to maximise opportunities for children's learning.

## 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. All staff work together to foster the characteristics of effective early learning:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

## **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 satisfaction 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 EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

We recognise the three Prime Areas (PSE, CL, PD) underpin all the other areas of learning. The remaining Specific Areas support them and help strengthen children's learning and development. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Developmental Matters and Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

## **Monitoring and Review**

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

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

## Leadership and Management

The central leadership of the EYFS is undertaken by the EYFS Leader. Regular EYFS meetings are held to discuss assessment, individual pupils, EAL/SEN issues and joint planning. All members of the EYFS are encouraged to attend to help the consistency and effectiveness of the EYFS team.

Priorities relating to the EYFS are identified in the School Improvement Plan and in the EYFS Annual Curriculum Review.

Roles and responsibilities for all staff are reviewed in line with Performance Management Procedures and staff training and development needs are outlined in the School Improvement Plan.

All staff and governors are aware of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the importance of this Key Stage in relation to children's learning and its impact on raising standards across the school.

The Leader responsible for the Early Years Foundation Stage is James Gregory.

Date reviewed by the Governing Body: November 2018

Date to be reviewed: September 2019