

St Helen Auckland Early Years Foundation Stage 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.” Guidance for EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Children join us, age 2 /3 for a morning or afternoon session on a daily basis. They begin attending school full time at the start of the school year in which they turn five.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

Aims

To create a safe, caring and stimulating environment where everyone (staff and pupils) feel valued.

To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which is developed and created using the children’s interests.

To promote the value of play.

To provide opportunities which encourage co-operation and independence.

To develop the child’s enthusiasm to learn and the skills necessary to further that learning.

To build positive relationships with all those involved in the child’s development.

To develop learning in the outdoors.

A Unique Child

St Helens Auckland Foundation Stage recognises 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 are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our unit 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.

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.

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.”

Caring and learning are inseparable and therefore the understanding of this is central when supporting children. We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children.
- promote good health (including oral 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.

Positive Relationships

In St Helen Auckland Foundation stage we recognise that children learn to be strong, independent and form 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 children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class ;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Parents to complete a questionnaire about their child's likes, dislikes, what they can do and what they would like them to do
- A meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent 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 each school year and progress checks commenting on Personal, Social and Emotional development, Physical development and Communication and Language.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Star of the week, SEAL assemblies, Sports Day, End of Topic activities etc.

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 a member of the EYFS staff acts as a 'Key Person' to children in EYFS.

Where children continue to attend preschool provision / child minders, while only attending school part time, we aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children's achievements.

Enabling Environments

In St Helen Auckland Foundation Stage 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 Planning within the EYFS follows the revised EYFS guidance. This is divided into specific areas (Literacy, Maths, Understanding the World and Expressive Art and Design) and Prime areas (Personal, social and emotional development, communication and language and physical development). Medium term planning is used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning, however the teacher may alter these plans in response to the needs (achievements) 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 in nursery, this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded on Tapestry as baseline/assessment sheets. They also contain information provided by parents and other settings. Assessment in reception is ongoing from observations and work completed by pupils. 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 also provided a report commenting on the characteristics of effective learning. 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 has two enclosed outdoor areas. 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

opportunities for 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 areas of learning.

Transition

Two year old provision/Nursery

- Parents are invited to an informal visit with their child to meet their key worker, outline the daily routines and curriculum, and complete necessary paperwork with the school secretary.
- Parents and staff work together to settle the child into the setting. This is dependent upon the child and is flexible.
- A booklet and any information regarding the Foundation Stage is offered to each parent.
- A home-school contract is discussed which initiates parental involvement.
- Parents complete a questionnaire about their child to give as much information as possible.

Transition to Yr 1

We ensure transition from Reception to year 1 is as smooth as possible. Foundation Stage and KS1 teachers work closely to look at the curriculum and prepare children for their learning transition. The year 1 teacher spends time with the children in the Summer term to gain an insight into what the children can do and so that children can become comfortable with the new teacher. Staff have meetings to discuss progress of children throughout the phase to ensure everyone involved with the children are fully aware of their previous experiences in school. We have taken parental views into consideration when preparing our transition phase.

We invite all Reception parents to a parents evening in July when we discuss the Y1 curriculum, introduce the Y1 staff and give parents the opportunity to ask questions. We have a taster afternoon in July when the YR children visit their new teachers and TAs in their respective classrooms. Reception children will join KS1 assemblies in the Summer Term and begin to spend time outside at break time with KS1 children, supported by Foundation Stage staff.

Learning and Development

In St Helen Auckland Foundation Unit 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 1/2. 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.” EYFS

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.

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.” EYFS

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.” EYFS

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 split into 2 main areas :-

Specific – Literacy, Maths, Understanding the World and Expressive Art and Design

Prime – Personal, Social and Emotional, Communication and Language and Physical Development

Children are also assessed against the Characteristics of Effective Learning – playing and exploring, active learning and Creating and thinking critically

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are age related 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 the EYFS coordinator and early year's practitioners to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The Headteacher and EYFS/KS1 leader regularly provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

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

Outside Agencies

We have good relationships with the feeder One Point centre and are able to visit children joining the school in their own nursery setting. We also have opportunities to meet with other Foundation Stage teachers through cluster meetings. We also have a good working relationship with other agencies to support children's development.

- Early Years advisory services.
- Lending Library.
- Durham County Learning Support Services.
- School Health Visitor.
- School Nurse / Auditory Service/ School doctor.

SignedHeadteacher

SignedChair of Governors

Date September 2022

Review September 2023

Staffing

Foundation Stage Team

Mrs Janet Elmes (FS/KS1 leader, Deputy Head Teacher/Teacher)

Mrs Emma Whitehead

(Teacher/ part time/temporary)

Mrs Heather Airey

(Teacher)

Mrs Jen Hardwick

(Teaching Assistant)

Miss Ruth Neil

(Teaching Assistant)

Miss Gemma Sumpton

(Teaching Assistant)

Mrs Judith Cooper

(Teaching Assistant)

Mrs K Gauchi

(Teaching Assistant)

First Aider/ Paediatric First Aiders – Jen Hardwick , Ruth Neil, Gemma Sumpton, Judith Cooper, Janet Elmes, Heather Airey, Kim Gauchi

Senior Management Support

Head Teacher - Maeve Mackenzie

Deputy Head Teacher – Janet Elmes

FS/KS1 leader– Janet Elmes