

# Stretton Handley C of E (VC) Primary School



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure our children/young people are appropriately safeguarded this policy is included under the safeguarding umbrella.

### Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

### Intent

At Stretton Handley CE Primary School, we recognise the importance of giving our children the best possible start to their education by planning and implementing teaching and learning opportunities that support them in reaching their full potential. We understand the crucial role that Early Year's education has to play in providing firm foundations upon which the rest of a child's education is successfully based. It is our intention to provide a broadly enriched, rounded and stimulating learning environment, indoors and outdoors, where children can work with adults and peers in a climate of mutual respect to develop confidence in their ability to learn, the social skills necessary to learn and the emotional capabilities to enable them to understand their feelings and to solve problems. This will enable them to develop the skills, attitudes and understanding that will form the basis of lifelong learning and encourage them to become useful, active members of a diverse and constantly changing society.

### Implementation

We recognise that children will learn most effectively when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults who care for them. We aim to provide a setting that encompasses a safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence that helps them to achieve their potential.

Each half term, EYFS staff introduce a new theme to provide inspiration for learning, whilst providing the flexibility for children to follow their own interests and ideas. Children learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities. The timetable is carefully structured so that children have directed teaching during the day. The timetable changes throughout the year to take into consideration the changing needs of the children. These sessions are followed by small focused group work. This means the teacher can systematically check for understanding, identify and

respond to misconceptions quickly and provide real-time verbal feedback which results in a strong impact on the acquisition of new learning.

Children are provided with plenty of time to engage in 'exploration' throughout the variety of experiences carefully planned to engage and challenge them in the provision. The curriculum is planned for the inside and outside classrooms and equal importance is given to learning in both areas.

## **Curriculum**

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

We aim to provide a quality teaching and learning environment that is committed to raising standards and ensuring appropriate challenge for all children.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we realise that the way in which children engage with other people and their environment, underpins the learning and development across all areas.

The characteristics of effective learning are:

- Playing and exploring – engagement
- Active Learning – motivation
- Creating and thinking critically – thinking

The three areas support the children to sustain their motivation and effectiveness as learners.

## **Planning**

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, when children enter school, we focus strongly on the three prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Our enabling environment and warm, skillful adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration. Our curriculum recognises the skill development for each child providing opportunities for the children to rehearse, consolidate, apply, link and extend their learning.

Our approach is committed to a healthy balance of child-initiated learning and adult-led activities, where we encourage children to develop as confident and capable learners, who enjoy exploring their own ideas and theories, whilst practitioners observe, support, discuss, challenge, extend and scaffold learning. Through carefully developmentally appropriate planned activities, enhanced provision is led by children's interests to ensure every child may grow to their fullest potential as an individual.

Play is the building block of a child's intellectual, social, emotional, physical and language skill development. Most of the Early Years school day is dedicated to child-initiated learning (play) where staff respond to, extend, scaffold and engage in quality talk to support the children's learning.

We recognise the importance of providing a meaningful language-rich environment; we want our children to be able to express themselves and engage in conversations with their friends and adults. We share stories, poems and sing songs throughout the day, as well as using language to support vocabulary and thinking-skills.

Our teaching of reading and writing is based on a systematic synthetic phonics approach supported by Letters and Sounds and is enhanced by provision in the classroom.

Mathematical ideas are explored and focused around a child's contextual understanding and real life experiences. Our enhanced provision supports maths learning and our adult focus sessions aim to deepen understanding and build the number sense of smaller numbers; children also have the opportunity to discuss and experiment with larger number so that they understand them in context. Our provision allows opportunity to explore and investigate and develop their understanding of shape, space and measure. In Reception we use White Rose to support our teaching and learning.

We value imagination and creativity and seek to create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning through continuous indoor and outdoor provision, alongside trips, visits and regular forest

school sessions. The continuous provision plans ensure each area of learning is well resourced and equipped for the children to learn, practise, transfer and develop skills.

### **Teaching**

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

The features of effective teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- the fostering of a close partnership between practitioners and parents, so that our children feel secure at school from the onset and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that our 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 achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- 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 regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- the regular identification of training needs of all practitioners working within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

### **Playing and Exploring- Engagement**

We believe well-planned play both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which children learn with enjoyment and challenge during the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Through play that is planned in a secure environment and with effective adult support, children can:

- explore, develop and represent learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world;
- practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
- learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules;
- be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk and express their feelings;
- take risks and make mistakes;
- think creatively and imaginatively;
- communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems;
- express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

We aim to make learning for young children a rewarding and enjoyable experience during which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Early Years Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking

### **Active Learning- Motivation**

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**

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.

### **The Environment**

At Stretton Handley CE (VC) Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins with the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

The 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 locate equipment and resources independently.

It has an enclosed outdoor area and the children have free-flow access to these 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 the children opportunities to explore using their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access indoors and outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning and encourage a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

### **Assessment**

At Stretton Handley CE (VC) Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is updated at 3 assessment points throughout the year Baseline, Mid-point and Final.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated within the federation (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

The EYFS Profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). The profile will be shared with parents/carers at points throughout the year and along with a summary of the child's skills in relation to the three key characteristics of learning at the end of the year.

### **Working with Parents/ Carers**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

*“Parents are children’s first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years settings the results have a positive impact on the child’s development and learning. Therefore, each setting should seek to develop an effective partnership with parents.”*

(DfEE 2000)

Parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We believe that it is important that all early years practitioners work in close partnership with parents and other adults. When parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on a child’s development and learning. Valuing and building on children’s previous learning helps to promote these partnerships. 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 having 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;
- having an ‘open door’ policy;
- sharing each child’s learning journey through an online, secure system;
- inviting parents to a formal 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;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- encouraging parents to comment on progress in reading through the use of the reading diary;
- encouraging parents to contribute to their child’s Early Years Foundation Stage Journey through home observation and commenting on their general progress on their online learning journey;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child’s teacher if there are any concerns;

### **Transition**

Changing from a pre-school setting or within school, moving year groups, can be daunting for both parents and children. We aim to make this transition as easy and comfortable as possible for all involved. The Teacher and Teaching Assistant work closely with professionals within school and other settings ensuring the children have visits so they become comfortable within their new environment. We have regular dialogue with parents and professionals to ensure we gain a full overview of the child and their needs. We aim for each child to visit the classroom in the summer term before they start school.

## **Impact**

Our children will be actively engaged in their learning and the enjoyment of this learning will be apparent in their daily provision. All children will have experienced a curriculum that provides exciting and enriching learning experiences and opportunities for them to learn through educational visits and practical experiences. Our young learners will be able to appreciate and understand the world around them by experiencing and learning about different cultures, celebrations, music, dance, art and history. Children will actively ask questions about the world around them and their learning experiences. They will be able to take risks as this is an opportunity to learn. Our Early Years children will be successful learners and fully prepared for the next stage of their education as they transition from Early Years Foundation Stage into Key Stage One. We know that by the end of Foundation Stage at Stretton Handley CE Primary School, our children will have developed the essential knowledge and skills required for everyday life and lifelong learning.

## **Admission Policy**

All children are admitted in September as full time or part time in line with the LA's admission policy.

## **Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures**

Through our PSED educational programme we promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our 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.”*

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage DfE September 2021)

At Stretton Handley CE (VC) Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021.

We understand that we are required to:

- Have and implement a child protection policy, and procedures, to safeguard children. (See Safeguarding policy)
- Designate a member of staff to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within our setting.
- Train all staff to understand our safeguarding policy and procedures, and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues.
- Have regard to the government's statutory guidance for 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' and to the 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales 2015

- Have regard to the government's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2021) statutory guidance.
- Inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working, or looking after children on our premises
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure at least one member of staff who has a current paediatric first aid certificate must be on the premises and available at all times when children are present, and must accompany children on outings.
- Ensure staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety.
- Ensure the staff:child ratios meet the requirements for each age group of children as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021
- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, including the oral health, of children preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill. (See First aid policy)
- Ensure there is a first aid box accessible at all times with appropriate content for use with children. Keep a written record of accidents or injuries and first aid treatment and inform parents and/or carers of any accident or injury sustained by the child on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable, of any first aid treatment given.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs. (See Behaviour policy)
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that we take all reasonable steps to ensure staff and children in our care are not exposed to risks and demonstrate how we are managing risks. (See Health and Safety policy)
- Maintain records and obtain and share information to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to help ensure the needs of all children are met.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.

### **Equal Opportunities**

In accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy all children within the Early Years Foundation Stage at Stretton Handley CE (VC) Primary School must be given full access to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff will endeavour to help all children to reach their full potential irrespective of race, gender, age or ability.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception

Year, and some progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able and are gifted or talented, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

### **Monitoring and review**

The Headteacher , Foundation Stage Lead and Governors will carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Review date: Annually

Approved by governors: