

*“With faith in our hearts, we achieve and succeed.”*



# All Saints National Academy

## EARLY YEARS POLICY

### Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Local Academy Committee on an annual basis.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Local Academy Committee on 17 May 2023

It is due for review on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Signature .....

Date .....

Principal

Signature .....

Date .....

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 In our setting, the Foundation Stage is covered within our Reception class. Entry into our academy is at the beginning of the school year in which the children are five (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday).
- 1.2 The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. It is the Early Learning Goals that set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- 1.3 The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:
  - it builds on what our children already know and can do;
  - it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
  - it offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points,
  - it has a content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
  - it provides a rich and stimulating environment.

## **2 Aims and objectives**

- 2.1 The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by promoting and developing:
  - Listening, Attention and Understanding
  - Speaking
  - Self-Regulation
  - Managing Self
  - Building Relationships
  - Gross Motor Skills
  - Fine Motor Skills
  - Past and Present
  - People, Culture and Communities
  - The Natural World
  - Creating With Materials
  - Being Imaginative and Expressive
  - Number
  - Numerical Patterns
  - Comprehension

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- Word Reading
- Writing

**3 Teaching and learning style**

3.1 The features of effective teaching and learning in our academy are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.

3.2 The more general features of good practice in our academy that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents that helps our children to feel secure within the academy, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the 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 space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our setting;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

**4 Play at the Foundation Stage**

4.1 Through play, our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they

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investigate and solve problems. They express fears, or re-live anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations.

**5 Inclusion at the Foundation Stage**

5.1 We believe that all our children should have the best education possible. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their full potential. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning then we use this to inform their next steps.

5.2 In the Foundation Stage, we set realistic but challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of all learners within our setting.

5.3 We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively;
- offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid 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 providing support (such as speech therapy), as necessary.

**6 The Foundation Stage curriculum**

6.1 Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas. The curriculum is also related to our community, ensuring local knowledge is built upon and a wide range of experiences are provided for our children.

**7 Assessment**

7.1 The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the

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Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observation and professional judgements and this involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

- 7.2 During the first weeks in the reception class, the teacher assesses the ability of each child, using the Reception Baseline Assessment materials. These assessments 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 within this baseline our parental consultation meetings. We also discuss the baseline results with colleagues as part of our QLC- this is our trust's Quality Learning Circle, a form of CPD for practitioners within the St Chad's MAT.
- 7.3 The teacher completes an assessment each term, and then updates the data on DcPro. At the end of the final term in Reception, we send a summary of these assessments to the LA and the Academy Trust for analysis. There are 17 summary scales. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings.
- 7.4 A learning journey is kept for each child; Early Years staff use these to record evidence and examples of each child's progress. The journeys contain wow moments that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting. We also use Tapestry to log observations and achievements, as the children move through the year they begin to record learning in phonics and writing books.
- 7.5 Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in the summer term.

## **8 The role of parents**

- 8.1 We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

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- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our setting;
- opportunities given to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting the academy;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- having flexible admission arrangements, and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- encouraging parents to co-operate if there are problems with the child's admission;
- offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, academy and parents, e.g. open mornings, activity sessions, Build a den day etc.
- allowing parents to contribute to learning journeys

8.2 There is a formal meeting for parents each term, at which the 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 each school year.

## **9 Resources**

9.1 We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages 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.

## **10 Transition from Reception to KS1**

10.1 During the final term in Reception, sessions are timetabled for the children to meet their Year 1 teacher. They have short bursts of interaction that may include story times and physical development activities alongside more formal maths or English sessions. Through this, staff and pupils have opportunities to build up relationships and a knowledge of each other to support the children entry and progress in Key Stage 1. In addition to this the children take part in a whole school transition day and parents are welcomed in to look at the new learning environment and meet staff. Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the child's Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's

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skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This supports handover dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1

**11 Monitoring and review**

- 11.1 This policy is monitored by the local academy committee, and will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary.