



St. Leonard's C.E. Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Christian Values

St. Leonard's is a Church of England School. All policies implemented across the school support the creation of a learning culture which celebrates our Christian ethos and core values of Love, Respect & Responsibility.

Aims/Principles

St. Leonard's early year's education will be carefully structured within a well organised, safe and enabling environment, offering children rich and stimulating experiences, building on what they already know and providing opportunities to develop what they need to know next. All children will be valued and feel secure. No child will be excluded or disadvantaged because of their gender, culture, religion, race, family background, disability or special educational needs.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

At St. Leonard's we provide a learning environment within a framework of care, consideration and safety. We wish to develop in each child a sense of responsibility towards themselves, others and the environment. Through play based activities and first hand experiences we aim to encourage independence, self-motivation, cooperation, creativity, communication, problem solving and self-discipline. We work to provide a caring, secure environment where the children can learn to the best of their ability and maximise their potential. We work alongside the rest of the school, Reception children integrating with KS1 for weekly birthday and celebration assemblies and the whole of the EYFS joining in for some special visitor assemblies and events such as fetes and sports activities.

Teaching, learning, the curriculum and planning

We acknowledge that parents know their children best and are their child's first and continuing educator. We recognise that at home children have already acquired many skills and much knowledge and we aim to build upon these foundations in partnership.

Young children develop physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually at different rates, often rapidly and unevenly across the spectrum. Teaching will support and extend learning, knowledge, understanding, and help develop skills and confidence to move forward. Young children's learning is holistic and interrelated. Children will be given opportunities to explore, experiment, play, talk, make decisions for themselves, pose questions, challenge their abilities and cooperate in a variety of situations.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum we provide will make provision for the different starting points from which the children will develop their learning and be relevant to the varying stages of children's development. We will provide well-planned and purposeful learning and teaching opportunities, both indoors and outdoors and will work alongside parents and carers to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

Planning is in accordance with the EYFS Statutory Framework. Activities may be planned by adults (adult led), set up by adults to encourage child initiated or initiated by children. Adults will observe play and interact to engage children in the learning process, to foster shared sustained thinking and to help them progress. Objective led planning particularly focusses the observer to look for a child reaching their next step in a particular strand of learning and supports the adult to help the child achieve this. These plans could be completed for the whole class or a particular group of learners that need moving on.

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning and all the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Characteristics of Effective Learning is the ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – and underpins learning and development across all areas; they support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. We look for the Characteristics of Learning throughout all observations and encourage children to reflect upon the characteristics that they have shown or need to work towards.

Three of the seven areas of learning are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Long term planning comes from the 'Development Matters' document of ages and stages and the end of Reception year Early Learning Goals. Each child has an entry assessment completed for them which will inform staff of their stage using 'Development Matters' as well as getting to know them personally so that we can plan an exciting and engaging environment to support their learning. Medium term plans consist of processes that we have identified as a need for that group of children to learn in all 7 areas of learning as well as possible outdoor experiences and visits that could take place. It will also include seasonal activities and festivals that are relevant to the children. Short-term weekly planning and the environment plan is then created using feedback from our recent observations of the children's interests, abilities and next steps which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses. Learning objectives are taken from the 'Development Matters' document and are differentiated as appropriate according to the child's stage of development. Evaluations of activities inform future planning. Continuous provision ensures each area of learning is well resourced and equipped for the children to learn, practice, transfer and develop skills. Enhanced environment helps cater for children's interests and next steps.

Nursery children have group times in their key person groups and in Reception the children may have whole class, differentiated or key person group times. These group times in Reception include a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds' and daily differentiated Mathematics.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are encouraged by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and their specific interests.

We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between classrooms and the outdoor area.

Assessments

Children's progress is continually monitored through observation of child initiated and adult led activities and recorded. These observations and examples of work are recorded using an online Learning Journey 'Tapestry' (see more information below). They are confidential but all parents have their own access and are able to add comments and their own observations of their children's achievements at home. All practitioners and parents/carers are encouraged to contribute to these records. Progress is measured using the age bands in the 'Development Matters' document throughout the year and children are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception year. The class teachers, with assistance from key persons, are responsible for producing a written report, including the characteristics of learning, for parents at the end of the academic year. Class teachers will make judgements using the 3 E's (emerging, expected and exceeding) against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals which will be attached to this report. This is a statutory requirement and results will be sent to Oxfordshire County Council. In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teachers will meet with the Reception teachers to discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to agree a starting point in Year 1 and support a smooth transition. The discussion held helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

Learning Journeys

St Leonard's Foundation Stage ensures that all children attending the setting have a personal Learning Journey which records photos, observations and comments, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage, to build up a record of each child's achievements during their time with us.

Procedures

- Each child will have a key person allocated to them who will be responsible for the compilation of that child's Learning Journey, including their next steps in learning (however all staff will add observations for all children).
- St Leonard's uses an online Learning Journey system (Tapestry), allowing staff and parents to access the information from any computer via a personal, password-protected login.
- Staff access allows input of new observations and photos or amendment of existing observations and photos. Staff must keep their passwords and pin numbers secure and protect images of children by ensuring **only** they have access to their Tapestry account and their school tablet. Staff members are encouraged to leave their tablet at school unless they **need** to update their Learning Journeys out of school time.
- Parent access allows input of new observations and photos or the addition of comments on existing observations and photos – parent log-ins do not have the necessary permission to edit existing material.
- Observations input into the Tapestry system are moderated by a class teacher before being added to the child's Learning Journey.
- Parents logging into the system are only able to see their own child's Learning Journey.
- Parents are asked to sign a consent form giving permission for their child's image to appear in other children's Learning Journeys, and to protect images of other children that may appear in any photos contained in their child's Learning Journey.
- The Learning Journey is started once the child has started Nursery. During the first term, entries will be made more frequently as staff get to know the children.

- New observational entries to a child's Learning Journey will usually be uploaded within a week of the observation being made.
- Tapestry is not used as a general communication tool between Nursery and home. A child's Learning Journey is a document recording their learning and development and parents may add comments on observations or contribute photos, videos or information about activities they have been doing at home.
- Parents may contact us through the usual channels for any other day-to-day matters, e.g. absence, lost property, etc.

Security

- The Tapestry on-line Learning Journey system is hosted on secure dedicated servers based in the UK.
- Access to information stored on Tapestry can only be gained by unique user id and password.
- Parents can only see their own child's information and are unable to login to view other children's Learning Journeys.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. The Early Years Coordinator completes the 'Musts Audit' every 6 months to ensure we are complying with the statutory requirements for safeguarding and welfare. The school has stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety and welfare. All staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and have completed the training, including the 'Prevent' training. Weekly meetings are held where the safeguarding and wellbeing of our children is discussed including any health and safety issues that may have arisen throughout the week. We have trained paediatric first aiders within our Nursery and Reception Classes. All staff are aware of the protocol for any concerns regarding safeguarding and know who to go to with reports of concerns. If children fall asleep they must be checked regularly.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, teaching the importance of cleaning teeth (area of need identified in our school), following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Equal Opportunities

The EYFS is accessible to all regardless of ability, gender, religion, race, family background, disability or special educational needs. We aim to reflect the various different cultures present within our community.

There is a school SEND policy that applies equally to the EYFS. There are regular meetings between the EYFS staff and SENCO to discuss children's progress. Where necessary other professionals such as an Educational Psychologist, or a Speech and Language Therapist, may also work with children. A child may receive additional support to meet their educational needs.

Admissions and Transition

St Leonard's can currently admit up to 30 pupils per session (due to increase this to 60 from January 2018) for the statutory 15 or 30 hours per week into our Nursery Class. Wrap around care is also provided and a lunch session. An offer of a place is always accompanied by an invitation to visit the class, which provides an opportunity to meet the teacher and key person for each child and to begin a positive home/school link. Home visits are also arranged.

Oxfordshire County Council controls the allocation of the Reception class places in accordance with the criteria laid out in their preference booklets which are made available at the beginning of each school year. A place in our Nursery class does not guarantee a place in full-time education in Reception. There will be a single main point of entry in September of each academic year. Children have the option to attend part time for the initial few weeks in order to become familiar with the new environment and routines and to provide an opportunity for key persons to get to know each individual child more thoroughly so that their personal needs and next steps can be met. This is then followed by full time education.

During the term before children begin Reception a meeting is held for parents and arrangements are made for children to visit their new class and meet their new teachers. Discussions are held between their current Nursery teachers and visits are made to their current Nurseries. Home visits are also encouraged during the first week of September.

Other Agencies

School staff liaise with various other agencies or professionals who work with young children in the area.

There is a named Early Years Foundation Stage Leader, currently Mrs Fiona Keyser.

Reviewed September 2017