

FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

STATEMENT AND AIMS

At St Nicholas School it is our policy to build on the experience, skill and knowledge of the individual child. We aim to develop a good working relationship with each parent in order to ease the transition from home to school. Parents/Carers of Reception aged children are offered a home visit, where questions are answered and staff introduced on an informal basis.

Through home-school contact books, parents are informed on a regular basis of their child's timetable, class topics and daily activities, as well as providing an opportunity for highlighting progress or concerns. They are seen as a vital line of communication.

Children are sensitively encouraged to develop socially and emotionally. We expect each child to be aware of and have consideration for others and have a sense of self-worth.

In the Foundation Stage we aim to set the building blocks for each child's future education, developing independent learning skills across all areas, whilst helping pupils to follow high levels of structure and classroom routines to aid their prospective learning.

We make full use of specialised areas within the school, including the sensory room, food technology room and library, as well as the outdoor provision, including the covered learning area, sensory garden and play areas.

It is the aim at St Nicholas School for all children to experience the joy of success and achievement, whilst fulfilling their full potential.

CURRICULUM AREAS

MATHEMATICS

Maths makes sense of the world through an understanding of similarity and difference, patterns and logic. It is used to analyse and communicate information and ideas and to tackle a range of practical tasks and real life problems. Our curriculum covers the following areas:

Number: - Learning number names, symbols and sequences, one to one correspondence and concepts of addition and subtraction.

Shape, Space and Measure: - Handling and recognition of 2D and 3D shapes, use of positional prepositions and comparisons of size and quantity.

Calculating: - Using numbers in practical contexts, including sharing objects between others, comparing numbers of objects and grouping objects into sets.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

This area includes communication, speaking and listening and early reading and writing skills.

Children are encouraged to develop listening skills by sitting quietly at 'Circle time' listening to stories and rhymes and participating when appropriate. They are encouraged to make contributions to activities, whether by naming a character in a book or signing along to a rhyme.

Speaking, Listening and Attention: - We have whole class and small group language activities, to encourage listening and responding, turn-taking and choosing. We also work on developing eye-contact and early vocalisations through schemes such as Mr Tongue and Intensive Interaction.

Reading: - We use the Oxford Reading Tree scheme and children become familiar with the main characters and listen to stories from the Big Books. When they are ready, we send home flashcards to match and then read, along with early reading books. In addition, children visit the school library once a week to choose a book for sharing at home.

Writing: - We use the Handwriting without Tears scheme, to familiarise the children with letter shape, encouraging them to make the letters using wooden lines and curves to fit templates. This is reinforced by using play dough to roll and place on templates and employing the wet/dry/try method on chalkboards. We also use the Jolly Phonics scheme to reinforce letter sounds through rhymes and songs.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL

This area covers developing relationships between children and adults, learning to manage behaviour and increasing confidence and self-esteem. The children are encouraged to interact with their peers and begin to engage in parallel and co-operative play. They are learning to share as well as developing independent learning skills. In addition, they are aided in all areas of self-help, to become less dependent on adult help and therefore, to increase their self-confidence.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

In this area of learning, children develop the skills and understanding to help them make sense of the world. This forms the foundation of later work in science, history, geography, R.E. and ICT. Activities involve hands-on experiences, encouraging exploration, observation and problem-solving and include the outdoor environment, to stimulate children's interest and curiosity.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN

Through a wide range of art and craft activities children develop their imagination and refine their abilities using a variety of materials and tools. In addition to painting, children are given the opportunity to engage in model-making, collage, clay and printing. A specialist music teacher helps pupils to develop an appreciation of sound and rhythm and exploring the wider cultural spectrum. Children are encouraged to use their voices for singing and to experiment with a variety of percussion instruments.

PHYSICAL

A specialist PE teacher engages the children in developing gross motor skills, co-ordination, balance and ball skills.

Children have regular access to the different physical areas around the school, such as the soft play room, Trim trail and large climbing apparatus, to reinforce skills learned in structured lessons.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND PLANNING

On entry, all children are given a baseline assessment, using the Individual Assessment Records and an IEP is then devised. These are evaluated and new objectives are set termly.

In addition, each child has a Foundation Stage Profile, consisting of observations and photographic evidence, to show a child's level of ability in each area at any one time.

Planning takes account of these individual abilities and is topic-based. It follows the Foundation Curriculum, in conjunction with St Nicholas School schemes of work.