



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

January 2024

Contents

- 1. Philosophy**
- 2. Aims**
- 3. Legislation**
- 4. The Structure of the EYFS at St Mildred's**
- 5. Intent**
- 6. Curriculum and Teaching**
- 7. Implementation**
- 8. Impact and Assessment**
- 9. Communication with Parents**
- 10. Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding**

Our Early year's policy describes the framework upon which the beliefs and practice of this school are based, this policy should be used in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning policy, Assessment policy and SEN policy.

1. Philosophy

At St Mildred's we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to reach their full potential. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. In the Foundation Stage children learn best through play based activities and first hand experiences. Each child is unique and is valued as an individual, we aim to provide a secure foundation through learning and development opportunities based around the needs of each individual child.

2. Aims

At St Mildred's we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. With a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value the individual child and work closely alongside parents and others to meet individual needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

We provide a high quality curriculum in line with the Statutory Framework for 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

3. Legislation

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

4. The Structure of the EYFS at St Mildred's

At St Mildred's, our Early Years provision includes three Reception classes, which integrate. There is an intake of 90 children, who are organised into 3 main teaching groups. Each class has a team of teachers and classroom assistants. Each classroom has specific areas for continuous provision which are carefully planned, yet open-ended. Resources are accessible to the children as part of ongoing provision, as well as enhanced and provocations to promote learning. The three classrooms are connected to our large outdoor area. Children at St Mildred's learn through a balance of child-initiated play-based opportunities and adult directed time. Children have daily opportunities to take part in free flow. This describes the time in which children can choose which area they would like to

play and learn in, whether that's outside or any of the three classrooms. We teach daily phonics using the Little Wandle scheme. Maths is taught daily using White Rose Maths. The daily routine provides opportunity to teach, practise and apply knowledge and skills through short focused sessions throughout the day. The style of teaching and organisation of the curriculum changes gradually over the year as the children develop incorporating more adult led activities.

5. Intent

It is our intent to ensure that every child has access to a broad, balanced EYFS curriculum which prepares them for now and for the future in terms of opportunities and experiences. Following personal interests and individual needs in the EYFS at St Mildred's, allows us to plan and provide opportunities throughout our EYFS curriculum to support learning and development and achieve their next steps.

Our EYFS curriculum aims to enable our children to be:

- Competent and creative learners; who are curious about the world around them
- Secure and confident; who enjoy coming to school and learning new skills and knowledge building on their existing learning
- Skilful communicators; who connect with others through language and play.

We intend to:

- Provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning, which meets the individual needs and interests of the children.
- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS framework, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context making positive home school links and share a common sense of purpose with parents.
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Aim to develop warm and secure relationships with individual children and adults
- To encourage active learning through first hand experiences both in indoor and outdoor play, and through both verbal and non-verbal communication.
- To value the cultural diversity within our school and community.

6. Curriculum and Teaching

Our curriculum intent is to provide a happy, safe, stimulating and well-organised environment in which children learn by building upon what they already know and can do. 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 the early learning goals. We use a range of familiar topics, linked to their experiences, as well as unfamiliar topics, to spark their interest and exploration of the wider world. In doing this we provide a curriculum and environment where the children feel safe and secure when developing their knowledge and skills, yet are challenged and are exposed to new learning.

All the seven areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

These areas 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:

***Communication and Language**

***Physical Development**

***Personal, Social and Emotional 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**

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined in the EYFS framework. We plan and offer a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences allowing them to explore, think creatively and be active both inside the classroom and outside. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes and life-long love of learning. Free flow helps children to develop these skills in all areas. In our environment you will see that the Prime Areas are planned for in every area. The three classrooms offer different and complimentary areas of provision with adults on hand to model, guide and teach. Staff at St Mildred's carefully consider the needs of the children, their interests and their stages of development and use all of this information to help plan a challenging and enjoyable experience across all areas of Learning and Development. Whilst in the environment staff will also take the learning to the children in their play through the 'Objective Led Planning' style.

7. Implementation

Transition into Reception

The children begin their educational journey at St Mildred's Infant Primary School through a smooth transition between Nursery and Reception.

Our aim is to establish a smooth and successful transition to school by visiting preschool settings. We liaise with outside agencies, practitioners and parents to gather information. Once parents have been offered and confirmed a place with us, we invite parents/carers in for a welcome meeting. We then invite each child in during the summer term to meet their teacher and experience our EYFS environment during 'stay and play' sessions. Parents will be invited in to meet with school staff too and we are happy to answer any questions they may have. At the end of the summer term we have a Teddy bears picnic for all families and children to come along and begin to build relationships with each other and our school community.

In September, each child will receive a Home Visit from their Class Teacher and Teaching Assistant. It is important to us to begin to get to know each child on a 1:1 basis in the place they feel most confident. Parents will help to complete a starting school questionnaire to share information about

their child with the team. The children then join us with a phased start to school, coming in on either a morning or afternoon sessions. After this, the majority of children will join us for full school days. Transition into EYFS at St Mildred's is a flexible process; we recognise that the needs of each child differ greatly and are happy to adapt our transition when necessary. We also invite the parents in during term 1 for a curriculum meeting where we aim to help them understand how the children will be learning in our EYFS environment.

8. Impact and Assessment

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA, May 2021).

Ongoing assessment is essential to 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 and children's next steps. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers on Tapestry, our online Learning Journal. As a team, we carry out regular internal moderation sessions and also ensure that staff attend external meetings and training to ensure that we moderate our judgements.

Using The Development Matters guidance, teachers make judgements about the learners' progress through target questioning and through discussions about learning. In addition, EYFS Staff make summative judgments on a termly basis and this information is tracked on tapestry. The data is analysed by the EYFS team and by Senior Leaders. EYFS practitioners utilise the information to make strategic choices about Children's development and next steps in learning. Regular monitoring and evaluation of children's progress enables us to continually adjust our provision in response to any areas of underachievement that may be identified, or if further is challenge needed.

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 or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging') The results of the profile are shared with parents. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools.

Assessment is a fundamental part of the planning process. To help us decide what to provide we observe children in their play in a range of situations. "On-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years practice." (Revised Development Matters in the EYFS 2021, p.3)

9. Communication with Parents

At St Mildred's we recognise that parents are the children's primary educators and that when parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning. With that in mind, we strive to create and maintain close partnerships with parents and carers; we welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways. We are a welcoming school and encourage open dialogue at drop off or pick up times or online through the Tapestry app. We invite parents in throughout the year to see their children learning in action or taking part in Sport's Days or Christmas plays. Additionally, we host evening or afternoon meetings in which we share information about the curriculum and life at St Mildred's. Parents of Reception children who attend St Mildred's get the

opportunity to meet with their teacher in Terms 1 and 3 for parent's consultation. This is to discuss their child's knowledge, understanding and skills, before receiving an end of EYFS report. This written report is issued in Term 6 in which we report on the characteristics of effective learning and each of the 17 Early Learning Goals.

10. Equal Opportunities & Safeguarding

All practitioners at St Mildred's Infant School have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring inclusive practice is always delivered in the EYFS setting. All children, regardless of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion or social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS at St Mildred's. 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 believe children should be allowed to take risks whilst being taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. We know that children learn best when they are healthy and safe, when their individual needs are met. We consistently follow our safeguarding policy to ensure this is the case.

Monitoring: This policy will be reviewed and approved by the FGB every 3 years.

Signed..... Date

Chair of the Governors

Signed Date.....

Head Teacher