

# **St Matthew's Church of England Primary School**

**with**

**Brunel Nursery School**



## **Policy for Early Years Foundation Stage**

*St. Matthew's Church of England Primary School's mission statement*

*We aim to provide a positive learning experience in a safe and respectful environment. We strive to teach an inspiring and inclusive curriculum that promotes a love of learning. As a Christian school, we endeavour to develop the spiritual and moral values of all members of the St. Matthew's family, and a meaningful, loving relationship with God. We want our children to be cheerful and independent individuals who reach their potential and are proud of their achievements. We hope to develop confident, caring citizens who are well prepared to enjoy happy and rewarding lives.*

*Our motto: Live, Love, Learn*

*Brunel Nursery School's mission statement*

*We aim to provide a positive learning experience in a safe and respectful environment. We strive to teach an inspiring and inclusive curriculum that promotes a love of learning. We want our children to be cheerful and independent individuals, who reach their potential and are proud of their achievements.*

*Our motto: Learning Together*

## **Foundation Stage**

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In St Matthew's CE Primary with Brunel Nursery the Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and start at Brunel Nursery. In the September before they turn five, nursery children move up to St Matthew's Robin's class, or onto other Reception classes. The Reception year is the first year in the formal school setting and will underpin all future learning for our children.

At St Matthew's CE Primary with Brunel Nursery we aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which encourages children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experiences. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence. We place importance on encouraging children to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation through play.

## **Starting Brunel Nursery**

Children begin in the Nursery when they have turned 3 years of age, and so may join us in the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. We induct children at their own pace, asking parent/carers to attend with their child for one or two hourly 'stay and play' sessions, and then to leave their child with the Nursery staff for short periods as needed, building up to children attending for 3 hourly sessions happily and confidently.

## **Starting Reception**

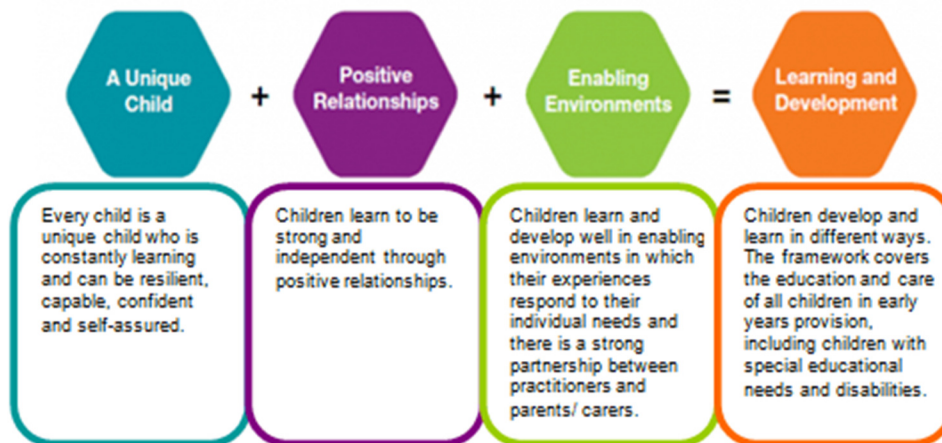
Children begin the Robins' Reception class in the September of the school year in which they turn 5 years old. Please see our Admissions policy for more information. Our admission arrangements are carefully organised and regularly reviewed to ensure that all parties are happy, confident and fully informed about all aspects of induction.

We value the importance of a positive introduction to school for both children and Parents/Carers. Towards the end of the Summer Term nursery children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher in the Robins Class and explore both the indoor and outdoor learning environment provided for them. Parents/Carers will also have the opportunity to attend a meeting with the Robins' staff. To further help children transition into school, Robins' children attend for half day sessions Am/PM for their first week and from then begin full day attendance.

## Aims of the Foundation Stage

- ✓ To make each child's first experience of nursery and school happy and fun.
- ✓ To provide a child-friendly settings that are safe, stimulating and caring.
- ✓ To ensure that all children feel valued in their Foundation Stage setting.
- ✓ To develop children's confidence and independence to carry out daily tasks and to become independent learners.
- ✓ To offer a balance of child initiated and adult led activities.
- ✓ To provide a differentiated curriculum firmly based on children's needs, interests, skills and knowledge.
- ✓ To foster and develop a partnership between home and school in order to establish an accurate understanding of each child's individual needs. (Parents as partners)
- ✓ To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential.
- ✓ To work within the guidelines of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:



Our practice is underpinned by these four themes.

## A UNIQUE CHILD

**‘Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.’**

**‘Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’**

At St Matthew's C of E Primary School with Brunel Nursery we believe all children are special. We give all our children the opportunity to achieve their best by:

- ✓ Using a wide range of teaching strategies that include Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic learners
- ✓ Planning activities that take into account children's individual learning needs
- ✓ Using resources and materials that reflect the community that the children come from
- ✓ Provide a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued

## **Inclusion**

All children at St. Matthew's C of E Primary with Brunel Nursery are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. We value the diversity of individuals within our school as we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of the range of life experiences our children have when planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children by taking in to account children with special educational needs, those who are more able, children with disabilities, children of different social and cultural backgrounds, boys or girls, and those of different ethnic groups.

## **Special Educational Needs**

When identified, children who require additional support within the classroom will be involved in small intervention groups or receive 1:1 support in line with the Special Educational Needs Policy. The class teacher will discuss any targets identified with the child's parents/guardians on a regular basis. We also ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of those children who have been identified as Gifted and Talented, extending their learning when appropriate.

## **Welfare**

**'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'**

The safety of our children is paramount at St. Matthew's C of E Primary with Brunel Nursery. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and help them understand why these exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children are encouraged to take risks in order to aid their own learning, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

At St. Matthew's C of E Primary with Brunel Nursery School we:

- ✓ Promote the welfare of children.
- ✓ Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- ✓ Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ✓ Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ✓ Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- ✓ Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- ✓ Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

## **POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS**

We also aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with children and their families. All staff involved within the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

### **Parents as Partners**

Parents are the first and most important educators of a child. We encourage their involvement in all aspects of learning and encourage a partnership based on mutual trust and respect by:

- ✓ Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our Nursery and Reception class;
- ✓ Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in our setting before their starting date;
- ✓ Operating an open door policy for parents with any queries;
- ✓ Giving parent/carers on-line access to their own child's Learning Journey through a Target Tracker app so that they may share in their child's Learning Journey with us throughout Nursery and Reception;
- ✓ Meeting with parent/carers as required to share and discuss attainment, progress or particular concerns;
- ✓ Offering a minimum of two parent/teacher consultation meetings per year to discuss children's learning progress and engage parents in the supporting of targets in true Parent-School partnership;
- ✓ Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Nursery and the Reception years;
- ✓ Inviting Parent/carers to workshops, open mornings and other in-school activities throughout the year.

## **ENABLING ENVIRONMENT**

St. Matthew's C of E Primary with Brunel Nursery provides a stimulating indoor and outdoor environment for both Nursery and Reception children, offering experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable, so giving children the confidence to explore and learn in secure, safe spaces.

The Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc. The learning environment is divided into clearly defined areas including: role play, book corner, writing table, maths area, listening centre, computer area, art and craft area, playdough, exploration (play dough, gloop, snowflakes...), sand, water, outside, construction, small world and painting.

Children have access to the outdoor classroom throughout the school day. The opportunity to move between the inside and the outside 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. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

### **The Indoor Classroom:**

We aim to ensure that the indoor environment is:

- ✓ bright, attractive, orderly and well ventilated
- ✓ has areas suitable for quiet learning, focussed individual or paired/group learning, comfortable relaxation, investigation, creativity and construction,
- ✓ organised to encourage children to take a pride in and responsibility for their environment and to develop independence in the selection, care and return of resources and equipment

## The Outdoor Classroom

We aim to ensure that our outdoor environment:

- ✓ offers opportunities for fresh air and exercise in a secure environment
- ✓ promotes physical development, health and general well being
- ✓ provides some covered and shaded areas
- ✓ has a variety of features, different surfaces, texture and levels
- ✓ offer a range of opportunities and challenges for independent and supervised exploration and experiences in all areas of learning

## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.’**

‘Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’

At St. Matthew’s C of E Primary with Brunel Nursery a carefully structured curriculum based on the Development Matters and Early Learning Goals offers provision that builds on the children’s individual learning needs. Through play, children have the opportunity to explore, investigate, discover, repeat, revise and consolidate their knowledge, skills and understanding.

The EYFS is divided in to 7 areas of learning and development, all are important and interconnected however, three 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, the **Prime Areas**, are:

- **Communication and Language;**
- **Physical Development**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development.**

There are 4 **Specific Areas**, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the world**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

**Communication and language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

**Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

**Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

**Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

**Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

**Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

**Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

We believe these seven areas depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. Children learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to provide opportunities that allow children to learn in the ways that best suit them ~ playing, talking, observing, investigating and problem solving, questioning, experimenting, testing, repeating, reflecting and responding to adults and each other. The curriculum is delivered through a combination of adult-led focussed learning and child- chosen/child-initiated activities. The learning may be delivered through a wide variety of activities aimed at the whole class, groups, pairs or individuals that take place both in and out of doors.

## **Planning**

We are guided by a Long Term Planning overview, Medium Term Plans and detailed weekly plans for cross curricular topics to which the children are encouraged to add their own interests and focuses for learning. Where appropriate, the whole topic is pupil-initiated and led. Systematic planning ensures continuity and progression in the introduction and development of specific basic skills and concepts. The Planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document.

## **Long term plan**

We choose themes and related activities as a vehicle for actively developing learning. We ensure thematic planning is appropriate to our cohort of children and the community to which they belong. Throughout each topic, work will be planned and delivered to cover all 7 areas of learning from the EYFS.

## **Medium term plan**

The medium term plan outlines objectives and activities which will be covered throughout a half term, taking in to account the age and development of the children. However the timing for this may vary as it is based on the children's interests and any unexpected educational opportunities which may arise.

## Short term planning

Weekly plans show clear learning objectives, activities and opportunities for assessment /observations. A mixture of directed and free choice activities are planned each week for children to engage in. In Reception, English, Mathematics and phonics are taught on a daily basis. More formal lessons will be taught towards the end of the Summer Term to ensure a smooth transition into year 1. Enhanced continuous provision plans also form the basis of weekly planning. Where appropriate, reference is made to children with Special Educational Needs, linked to their individual education plan (ICAN), intervention to help children 'Keep Up not Catch Up', and bi-lingual support for children having English as an additional language

In planning, guiding and assessing children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn as stated in the Statutory Framework, **Characteristics of Effective teaching and Learning:**

### Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

### Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

### Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

## Assessment

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 both formal and informal observations. At the end of their year in Reception class the children's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

- ✓ On entry assessments are made in Reception to give teachers and support staff an understanding of the children's individual abilities in each area of learning. We also carry out a 1:1 computer based, Baseline assessment of each child's attainment and understanding in vocabulary and language, early reading and mathematics. These assessments are then repeated at the end of the academic year.
- ✓ In Reception the Development Matters, begun in Nursery, are used to show children's progress. These are plotted on a termly tracker.
- ✓ The EYFS Profile will be completed as this feeds in to the school tracking system. Phonics and writing assessments are carried out at various points throughout the year.
- ✓ At the end of the Reception Year information will be passed on to the next teacher giving them a detailed account on each child's abilities.
- ✓ Early Years Foundation Stage Profile data will be sent to the LA.

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