



# St Marychurch

Foundation Stage Policy

## Foundation Stage Policy



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## **Introduction**

This document sets out our aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage at St Marychurch CE Primary and Nursery School. The Foundation Stage refers to children in Nursery and Reception classes. This is now recognised as a distinct key stage and includes children aged three to five.

## **Aims:**

- \* To provide high quality education and care for young children.
- \* To provide a stimulating, happy and safe environment.
- \* To ensure that each child feels valued, included and secure.
- \* To promote a natural enjoyment, enthusiasm and positive attitude to learning.
- \* To work in partnership with parents and carers.
- \* To ensure equality of opportunity for all.
- \* To ensure continuity of good practice throughout the foundation stage.
- \* To develop each individual through the six key learning areas.

*We want all children to feel welcome, safe and happy not only to come to school but share their ideas and learning with peers and adults alike. It is of vital importance that the foundation stage be a positive and happy place for young children to be.*

## **The Early Years Curriculum**

All children will have access to a broad range of purposeful, relevant, rich and diverse opportunities and experiences which are planned in line with the early years curriculum and working towards the Early Learning Goals. The QCA curriculum guidance and Cornwall Footsteps planning documents will be used in the

Foundation Stage. It is agreed that the principles set out in the QCA document underpin young children's learning.

The curriculum is divided into six broad areas of learning:

- \* Personal, social and emotional development
- \* Communication, language and literacy
- \* Mathematical development
- \* Knowledge and understanding of the world
- \* Physical development
- \* Creative development

### *Teaching and Learning in the Foundation Stage*

In order to promote effective learning the teacher will provide opportunities and experiences for children to:

- \* Have access to a wide range of opportunities and experiences which will allow them to explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their knowledge, skills and understanding
- \* Imitate activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from one another
- \* Have time to explore ideas and interests in depth
- \* Feel secure in order to become confident learners
- \* Make links to other areas of learning
- \* Undertake creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language

All staff and adult helpers involved in the foundation stage will:

- \* Work in partnership with parents and carers
- \* Promote children's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable
- \* Teach skills and knowledge
- \* Understand that children learn in different ways and at a different pace to each other
- \* Use rich and varied language to help children develop linguistic structures for thinking
- \* Plan both indoor and outdoor provision to maximise opportunities for children's learning

**Parental and Volunteer Involvement:**

Parents and carers play a vital role in a child's development and that does not stop when they enter school. We like to encourage helpers in both Nursery and Reception for both their and our benefit. All helpers are given guidelines about working within the setting - their interaction with children, what to do when they come across a problem, dealing with individual concerns and so forth. *(Please see Appendix for a copy of the Guidelines.)* On occasion it may not be appropriate for a parent or carer to help in the same class as their child. This can be for many reasons, which would be explained at the time. The adult will be offered the chance to work within another class or to come in when it is more appropriate for the child.

As part of our welcome meetings for parents we explain the areas of learning and give some brief details of how they can help their child and from time to time meetings or letters will provide parents further information about

specific issues. We hope in the future to develop more ways of helping parents support their children. The Early Years department has been and is involved with initiatives supported by Community Education Torquay in helping parents improve their own Literacy and Numeracy skills in such courses as Family Literacy and giving practical advice on working with your child in courses such as Dads and Lads and Keeping up with your kids.

### **Equal Opportunities:**

We aim to provide all children with a broad based and well-balanced curriculum irrespective of gender, race or culture. The resources and approaches used aim to reflect and respect the diverse experiences of all the children.

### **Planning:**

All planning builds upon what children already know and can do.

- The long term planning is a two-year rolling programme covering similar themes each year. The Nursery and Reception classes plan for the same themes. *(See appendix for details.)*
- Detailed medium term plans are discussed termly.
- The curriculum is based on the Government's Early Learning Goals and themes, ideas and structure are taken from the Cornwall Footsteps materials.
- Short Term Planning, covers all areas of the Early Learning Goals. These plans should include objectives, activities to be covered, roles of adults and assessment opportunities. *(See appendix for planning pro-formas.)*

### **Assessment:**

Assessment is an integral part of everyday activities; informal assessments are being made whenever we interact with children.

Torbay 'Passports' are used each term to track and formally record the children's progress. Assessment weeks are planned for each term, enabling staff to make focussed observations and have time to collect evidence of children engaged in activities, both self-initiated and adult-directed. This evidence - in the form of work samples, photographs and notes from observations - will be collated in an assessment profile book, which will be shared with parents at appropriate opportunities such as parents evening.

In Nursery, observations form the basis of individual assessment and are integral to both medium and short term planning. Ongoing observations across the six areas of learning are made during self-initiated play and recorded on post it notes. In addition, detailed target observations are carried out on each child every other term. Observations relating to specific knowledge and skills are made during identified adult-directed activities. All observations are used to make assessments and inform future planning.

In Reception Baseline Assessment is carried out in accordance with Government and Local Education Authority guidelines - which currently are - NFER Baseline Assessment within the first six weeks at school and also to

prepare for gathering information for the new Foundation Stage Profile in June 2003.

Literacy assessment takes place from the second term in line with whole school Literacy assessment procedure and tracking of the pupil's achievement in phonics is assessed against the Progression In Phonics Step list each term.

In Numeracy attainment against the key objectives are assessed each half term and the children's calculation skills are assessed at the end of Reception in line with whole school Numeracy assessment procedure.

All of these assessments are used to inform planning and make early identification of any special needs.

*Reporting to parents* - Parents meetings are held each term in Reception and once during their time in Nursery. At these meetings passports, profile books and recent assessments will be discussed along with the child's general behaviour and attitude.

### **Special Educational Needs - SEN**

All staff have a responsibility for identifying any special needs and discussing these in the first instance with the parents. Effective early intervention strategies are then implemented in accordance with SEN code of practice. Where appropriate we work closely with outside agencies. We try to ensure good liaison with pre-schools settings attended prior to entry and inform the local health visitor of our admissions list to be fully informed of any special needs that might already have been identified or partially addressed. Home visits also allow this level of early identification. (Please refer to the whole school SEN policy for further details.)

## **Staffing**

The Foundation stage is currently split into three separate classes. The Nursery - which has places for 26 Full Time Equivalent children (which means 52 children can attend on a part time basis) and the Reception classes have space for 45, with a roughly equal split. This will on occasion mean children from January intake joining the September intake class - the oldest children will take these places except where exceptional circumstances exist.

Nursery - Full Time Nursery Teacher and Full Time Nursery Nurse

The Nursery Nurse always holds either NNEB, NVQ level 3 or above or BTEC in Nursery Nurse or equivalent qualification

Reception 1 - Class Teacher

Reception 2 - Class Teacher

General reception LSAs: 1 Full time per class

All staff in each class are involved in elements of planning, teaching, observing and assessing the children and aim to work as a close team at all times.

## **Staff Training**

All staff have opportunities to attend foundation stage meetings and courses provided by the local authority, enabling them to develop knowledge and skills and share ideas and good practice. These opportunities are in addition to whole school INSET. We currently aim to take full advantage of the additional funding by the Early Years Partnership to attend as much early years training as is appropriate.

### **Monitoring**

As part of our annual staff reviews, performance management and monitoring procedures staff may be observed up to three times a year. These observations will be supportive and a basis for future training and development needs. A member of senior management will regularly look at planning and have a monthly meeting with foundation staff.

### **Behaviour**

There is an expectation that all children learn how to respect each other, the adults around them and their environment. Positive rewards such as stickers, certificates and verbal praise are the ways in which we encourage this, occasionally it may be necessary to use agreed sanctions. (Please refer to the whole school behaviour policy). Where children are having continuous behavioural difficulties parents will be consulted.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

All resources and equipment are monitored regularly to ensure safe provision for all children. Children are taught how to use equipment and resources safely. The head teacher is responsible for the overall health and safety of the children. Consideration will be given to risk assessments in activity plans and specific risks will be made clear.

Accidents - In Nursery, accidents/incidents are dealt with by the Nursery Nurse, qualified to give First Aid. These

are recorded in a First Aid file and parents informed. In Reception, any minor incidents are dealt with by class staff and no record kept, but parents will be informed when appropriate. Any incident involving a knock or blow to the head or face will be treated in accordance with the schools first aid policy and reported to the parents or guardians at the end of the session or earlier if necessary.

Fire Drill - The children are regularly informed of the fire drill procedure and the reasons for it. Fire drills will be carried out in accordance with the whole school policy.

Collection of children - The children must be collected by an adult and parents/carers must inform the class teacher as to who is collecting their child.

### **Admissions and Transfer Procedures**

Children can be admitted to the Nursery from the age of three in line with the schools admissions policy. The children may spend up to five terms in the Nursery, depending on their date of birth, before transferring to Reception.

#### **Children transfer from Nursery or enter into school in line with Torbay Policy -**

Children aged 5 from September 1<sup>st</sup> - February 28<sup>th</sup> come into Reception in September. Children aged 5 from March 1<sup>st</sup> - August 31<sup>st</sup> will come in to Reception in January.

When children join the school in either September or January, a Home Visit will take place prior to their entry.

Each child will receive one home visit either before starting Nursery or before Reception if the child has not attended our Nursery.

### **SETTLING IN**

Before joining the Reception class children will have had opportunities to meet their new class teacher and class. This will have been through shared story times, opportunities to go into their new classroom, shared playtimes with the infants, joining in infant assemblies and attending infant performances in whole school assemblies.

All parents are invited to 'Welcome' meetings prior to home and class visits. The Nursery holds open sessions prior to home visits in the term before entry and the children are invited to two mornings in reception after their home visit in the term prior to entry.

Where a child may not be ready for five sessions in the Nursery consideration will be given to making attendance flexible to assist in a smooth entry.

When children start Reception we have a short period of time - usually up to a maximum of two weeks, where the children attend part-time allowing them a gradual entry, becoming used to the different routines and surroundings. Where a child is clearly not ready for full time education consideration will be given to what time would be appropriate and to build up to full time education.

### **Outings**

As part of a varied curriculum we believe it is important to take the children out of the setting into the local area. On such occasions we have a minimum of 1 adult to 3 children

for Nursery and 1 adult to 6 children for Reception. Where costs are incurred parents are asked to make a voluntary contribution to cover these costs.

### **Role of the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator:**

The Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- / Leading the Foundation Stage Team - pastorally, academically and pupil behaviour
- / Ensuring the organisation of welcome visits and meetings prior to entry
- / Monitoring planning - medium and short term
- / Leading whole team planning meetings - at least once per month
- / Being a member of the Senior Management Team
- / Monitoring and supporting teaching and learning in the stage as required
- / Supervising the general day to day running of the team in liaison with the Headteacher
- / Cascade information - particularly Early Years issues such as training

### **Resources:**

All staff will be responsible for using and storing resources, ensuring they are taken care of. It is our Policy to get 'Best Value' when buying resources. All resources in the Foundation Stage are for use in the Nursery and Reception classes. Each year the team will look at gaps in provision and decide priorities between them. We aim to have a clear idea of gaps in provision by developing lists of resources linked to areas of learning and themes covered.

## APPENDIX

- / Two Year Long Term Planning Rolling Programme
- / Blank Planning Formats for:
  - Medium Term plans
  - Weekly plans for Nursery
  - Weekly plans for Reception to include Literacy and Numeracy
- / Profile/Assessment book observations notes
- / Home visit forms
- / Baseline Assessment
- / Accident forms
- / Advice for Parent/Volunteer helpers
- / Literacy & Numeracy assessment procedures
- / Resources lists

Any other suggestions ??? -

- / Use of digital and video camera - note that they are used for assessment and observation purposes regularly
- / Photo's to illustrate.