

Dinting Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

The school's vision statement is taken from Matthew 22 verse 39,

“Love Your Neighbour as yourself.”

Dinting School aims to create a happy, secure, stimulating and challenging learning environment, in which each child can develop to their full potential. Dinting School aims to create a family atmosphere in which Christian care is offered to all members of the school community.

Christian values are built into the ethos and teaching at Dinting School, promoting attitudes of mutual respect and responsibility.

There are four main purposes to this policy:

- To establish an entitlement for all children in the EYFS with equality of opportunity;
- To establish expectations for all staff working with children in the EYFS to ensure quality and consistency;
- To state the school's approaches to the EYFS curriculum in order to promote parents' and carers' understanding of the curriculum;
- To promote continuity and coherence across the EYFS.

Introduction

The importance of the Foundation Stage

'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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life'.

(Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, September 2014).

Expectations

For most children, the end of the reception year will be the end of the Foundation Stage, when the expectation is that children will achieve the 17 early learning goals (ELGs). Although the early learning goals are intended for children at the end of reception, younger children will be provided with experiences which will support them in reaching the goals at the appropriate time. Those children exceeding the early learning goals will be given appropriate and sufficient challenge to support, extend and enrich their learning. A priority will be placed on each individual child's unique needs, interest and stage of development.

The aims of the EYFS curriculum and how these contribute to the school's aims

The school aims to ensure that the curriculum for the EYFS underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

These areas will be strengthened and applied through:

- Literacy (reading and writing)
- Mathematics (number and shape, space and measure)
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Strategy for implementation

Entitlement and curriculum provision

Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1. Our ultimate aim is to help and guide the children to become independent, enquiring and evaluative learners. Through the use of topics we follow children's interests in order to fully engage them in taking charge of their own learning.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, September 2015).

Learning and teaching

Children participate in whole class, small group and individual activities, with increasing times as the year progresses in order to accommodate children's needs and stretch their learning. Children will share in daily phonics, reading, writing and mathematics sessions. At all times, the characteristics of effective learning (playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically) are considered in our planning and teaching in order to meet each child's needs.

In order to promote effective learning the teaching 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;
- initiate activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from one another;
- have time to explore ideas and interest in depth;

- feel secure in order to become confident and independent learners;
- make links to other areas of learning;
- undertake creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language.

The staff 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.

Inclusion

Planning will meet the needs of both boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children with disabilities, children from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds, children from different ethnic groups including Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers and children from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

It is the school's intention to provide:

- a safe secure learning environment in which all children are valued;
- a wide range of opportunities to motivate support and develop;
- planned opportunities that build on and extend children's knowledge.

For those children with special educational needs, the focus will be on removing barriers to learning for children. Children's learning difficulties will be identified at an early stage and teaching will respond quickly to areas of difficulty. This will involve working closely with parents and developing an effective strategy to meet these needs. This may involve working with staff from other agencies in drawing up individual education plans.

Organisation

The learning environment in and out of doors will be planned effectively to meet the requirements of all areas of learning. It will be well organised into clearly-defined areas.

The areas will include:

- an attractive and comfortable place to read;
- sand dry and wet with a variety of equipment;

- water with equipment;
- mathematical and scientific equipment;
- a writing area with a variety of paper and tools to mark, make or write;
- imaginative play area;
- a variety of creative media such as paint, clay, wood, junk materials;
- baking materials and equipment;
- collections of interesting objects to handle;
- a variety of outdoor play equipment

All areas will be attractive and suitably resourced so that children are encouraged to use them and engage in purposeful, challenging activities with or without the presence of an adult.

Resources will be organised in such a way that children are enabled to make informed choices, select independently what they need and take responsibility for clearing away.

Each child has their own labelled peg in the cloakroom and tray in the classroom. We encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their PE bag, book bag and work safely in the right place.

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's learning in order to help make future plans and provide for children effectively. At present we have started to use 'Early Excellence' for our baseline assessment. We record observations in a variety of ways, using photos, post stick notes and sticky labels. Observations are recorded in children's individual learning journeys.

We encourage all parties to contribute to discussions, assessment and children's learning journeys. Parents have access to home stickers whereby they can record their own child's significant 'learning moments' outside of school. Assessment opportunities will be identified in planning and opportunities will be provided for:

- skilful and well planned observations of children;
- working in partnership with parents;
- evaluating the quality of provision and practitioners' training needs;
- ensuring baseline assessment is informed by observation, discussion and evaluation and in line with policy.

Within the spring term, a report for parents is provided with a commentary on children's attainment, progress and characteristics of learning. Parent's evenings are provided in the autumn and spring term. Throughout the Early Years the Class Teacher submits end of term assessment data to the Head Teacher showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning. At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report.

Leadership and management

Priorities relating to the EYFS will be identified in the school improvement plan as appropriate.

Relevant staff training and development needs will be outlined in the school improvement plan.

It is expected that all staff and governors are aware of the requirements of the Foundation Stage and the importance of the key stage in relation to the children's learning and its impact on raising standards across the school.

Learning Outdoors

Great emphasis is placed on ensuring that the outdoor learning environment contributes to all areas of learning.

Children should have access to the total learning environment in and out of doors for a substantial part of each session. All children will be encouraged to take part in the full range of outdoor experiences. Resources outdoors and indoors will be organised similarly to enable children to be independent and take responsibility. Planning incorporates outdoor activities for all weathers. The outdoor garden area is in use when either the whole class can go outside or when an additional adult is available to supervise small groups (Thursday afternoons).

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure learning environment and provide a curriculum that teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risk. We promote a healthy lifestyle by providing fresh fruit and milk for the children daily and encourage them to make independent healthy choices about what they eat. Each child has a named water bottle which they can drink from whilst they are accessing the enhanced provision.

Intimate Care - "Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins reception at Dinting.

Parents as partners

We pride ourselves on having outstanding relationships with parents and other parties. We have an 'open door' policy whereby we have daily discussions with parents regarding their children and actively encourage parents to take part in their child's learning experiences. We encourage parents who have a talent or specialism to share this at appropriate times in the year sometimes linking with the topic we are learning about. We draw on our links with the local and school community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on local walks, outings, trips and inviting members of the community into our setting.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned to ensure we meet the needs of each individual child. During the summer term, settings are visited that new starters attend and assessment documents and learning journeys shared or passed on. Following this, settling in sessions at school are provided in order to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. We have an excellent working relationship with our feeder nursery and regularly share outdoor play sessions and celebrations. We often share our expertise and discuss or even model best practise.

Parents are also invited to a 'New Starters' meeting where they meet the teacher and have opportunity to learn about a typical day at Dinting, buy book and PE bags and meet the catering staff. A handbook is provided with information about commencing Reception at Dinting and a 'Home – School agreement' to outline the school's expectation. Parents can book a time to meet the teacher one to one to share concerns and discuss their child.

In the first couple of weeks a phonics workshop is run to model reading strategies and the use of pure phonics. Throughout the year a Termly curriculum is sent out to inform parents of topics, projects and trips.

The Governing Body:

- To appoint a named governor who has responsibility to oversee EYFS. They will meet with the subject leader to review development plans.
- Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of early years provision and to our EYFS Governor.
- This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the light of changes to legal requirements.

Policy reviewed January 2020