



St Stephens Community Academy

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The An Daras Multi Academy Trust (ADMAT) Company
An Exempt Charity Limited by Guarantee
Company Number/08156955

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Recommended	
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Advisory Committee	Local Governing Advisory Body
Linked Documents and Policies	Learning Journey Policy 2016 Key Person Guidelines 2017

EFYS Policy

Purpose and Directions of the EFYS Policy: Rationale and Aims

“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 (EFYS) 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.” (Department for Education 2012)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EFYS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, we cater for children from 2-5years with the addition of our Pre-school. The Pre-School offers funded and paid for provision for 2, 3 and 4 year olds. In the Foundation Stage most children join us, full time, In September but are required by law to do so during the term after fourth birthday.

The EFYS principles which guide the work of all practitioners are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Effective practice in the EFYS is built on these four guiding themes. They provide a context for the requirements and describe how practitioners should support the development, learning and care of young children. This policy outlines how we meet each of the four themes.

A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from practitioners; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

We give children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- working in small groups to ensure all children can access learning.
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- providing opportunities to explore different cultures, customs and lifestyles.
- using the Unicef Rights of the child to support and develop an inclusive curriculum.

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 provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well being of all children. (See Child Protection Policy)

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."

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children.
- promote good health, good hygiene 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 staffing arrangements are organised to ensure safety and to meet the needs of the children.
- ensure visitors and parent helpers wear appropriate ID badges.
- ensure outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys, are safe and suitable for their 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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements through:

- using the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- providing parents and carers with an updated early years booklet containing all required information
- having secure premises
- requesting parents/carers complete a written permission form for local visits and school trips
- using the school's SEN policy
- having qualified first aiders on sight at all times
- providing children with fresh drinking water and a healthy snack
- ensuring our premises are smoke free
- using the school's behaviour policy
- having any one who works directly with children CRB checked
- following the staff to child ratios set out in the statutory framework
- carrying out appropriate risks
- planning to meet children's needs
- keeping up to date records of children in our setting
- following the school's Educational Visits Policy

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents/carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- visiting all children in their nursery setting prior to them starting school
- carrying out individual home visits prior to them starting school,
- providing sessions for parents/carers before beginning Foundation stage
- offering parents/carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- offering parental consultations each term at which the teacher and the parent/carer discuss the child's progress
- providing parents/carers with a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year
- facilitating a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers: celebration assemblies, class assemblies, sports day and workshops to support parents when helping their child at home
- sending ½ termly curriculum information to parents/carers
- sending weekly help at home sheets out to communicate key learning happening the following week.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the class teacher in Foundation Stage acts as 'Key Person' to all children in their class, supported by the teaching assistants. In the Pre-school children are assigned a Key Person on entry who tracks their development and support settling and transition (see Key Person Guidelines)

Professionals as Partners

At St Stephens School we recognise the importance of working closely alongside other professionals in order to fully support our children and their families from birth.

Enabling Environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Long term and medium term planning is based around the interests and needs of the child. These plans are then used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning. Continuous provision plans are in place to support children during child initiated learning.

Weekly planning in the Foundation class consists of phonics, numeracy and large group time planning focussing on adult led activities which ensure a breadth of all six areas of learning. Enhancements for the continuous provision are planned on a weekly basis to allow children to extend their learning and develop ideas. In the Pre-school planning is objective led. This means the learning is taken to the child and delivered at their level through play rather than the child being removed from the play to learn.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. We use The EYFS Profile to track and monitor children's learning throughout the EYFS and into KS1 where necessary.

We assess formatively by using narrative observations, anecdotal notes, photographs and samples of work. This involves the teacher and all other adults involved with the child i.e. LSPs, parents, students and volunteers. These assessments make reference to areas of the profile a child has achieved/is working towards. This information is kept in children's individual files.

We use the 2Simple 2Build a Profile to record judgements against the EYFS Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against 13 assessment scales derived from the ELG's.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and assessment scales. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. Equipment is clearly labelled and accessible to children. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. There is an outdoor area which foundation children can access. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 6 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Play

“Play underpins all development and learning for young children. Most children play spontaneously, although some may need adult support, and it is through play that they develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally.”(EYFS 2008:7)

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. Our timetable ensures that there is a balance of child-initiated and adult led play based activities.

Active Learning

“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of six areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Creative Development

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Role of Local Governing Body

Governors determine, support, monitor and review school policies. They support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively. They ensure that the building and equipment is safe. They monitor pupil attainment across the school and ensure that staff development and performance management ensure good quality teaching.

Next review will be: **January 2018**