



***High Aspirations, Moral Strength, Spiritual Depth***

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

Our Core Principles

- All children are entitled to high quality learning and teaching. This will equip them with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need today, to prepare them for life.
- Children learn at different rates and each child’s development is unique.
- Children learn best when they are happy, secure and actively involved in their own learning. We make their interests and fascinations a priority, and plan in deliberate opportunities to motivate and engage children.
- Effective teaching and learning in EYFS meets children’s identified needs and interests and ensures they develop across all seven areas of learning.
  
- Our Learning Environment is carefully thought out, and the classroom is accessible, inviting, and full of opportunity for children to explore and learn. We believe that natural, open ended resources allow children to best develop their imagination, becoming curious and thoughtful learners.
- Robust tracking and assessment ensures that we plan effectively for all children, taking into account prior knowledge and next steps.
- We are open. We regularly discuss and review our work with each other, and with parents. Discussion and review help us to ensure that children take part in learning with joy and enthusiasm. It helps us to ensure that the children’s learning in Reception prepares them well for Key Stage 1, so that they can confidently handle a transition, and continue their school journey.
- With the right support, **every** child can thrive.

At Andrews’ Endowed CE Primary School, we nurture each child and value their uniqueness.

We recognise that every child is a competent learner 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 others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Andrews’ Endowed CE Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our 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 Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of all our pupils.

Our Christian values of Love, Courage and Respect underpin all that we do.



## **Introduction**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the statutory framework that 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 are ready for school and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The overall aim of the policy is to ensure that effective, quality provision will be provided to enable children to achieve their full potential.

This policy has been developed to reflect the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It shows how Andrews' Endowed CE Primary School has organised and implemented the EYFS curriculum.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

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

## **Definition**

The Foundation Stage is valued as a stage in its own right and is not just preparation for Key Stage 1. It is a distinct phase that provides rich and diverse opportunities for lifelong learning. The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and continues until they reach five. The last year of the Foundation Stage is often described as the reception year. The introduction of the Foundation Stage does not change the point at which attendance at school is compulsory, which is the beginning of the term after a child's fifth birthday.

## **Aims of early education**

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- a secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported



(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021, p.5)

### **The Foundation Stage Curriculum**

Through a broad and challenging curriculum, we encourage our children to become deep thinkers, resilient learners and compassionate, responsible citizens. Our children leave Andrews' Endowed as aspirational, articulate and empowered life-long learners; equipped with the moral strength and spiritual depth they need to make their world a better place.

At Andrews' Endowed we believe that the children need 7 key skills as pre-requisite knowledge to starting school. School Readiness is when a child holds curiosity and enthusiasm for the world around them. They are able to co-operate and share with one another. They speak clearly in sentences whilst listening and understanding what others say. They move with co-ordination whilst able to address their care needs.

The bedrock of the practice in Early Years at Andrews' Endowed Primary School is to promote the school values of love, courage and respect. With these values embedded and fully understood by all children, we are creating excellent learning behaviours and productive and proactive learners. In order to become a strong member of society, the children need to make rapid progress in the prime areas of learning. These areas of learning underpin the children's ability to effectively access the specific areas of learning. The balance of child-initiated and adult-directed learning along with the promotion of the school values encourage better than expected progress in the prime areas with high percentages of children exceeding the age-related expectations.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

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.

### **Communication and Language**

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults



enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to

- manage emotions,
- develop a positive sense of self,
- set themselves simple goals,
- have confidence in their own abilities,
- to persist and wait for what they want and
- direct attention as necessary.

Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

### **Physical Development**

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their:

- core strength,
- stability,
- balance,
- spatial awareness,
- co-ordination and
- agility.

Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

Providers must also support children in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

### **Literacy**

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading.



Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together.

Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words.

Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

### **Mathematics**

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built.

In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures.

It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

### **Understanding of the World**

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters.

In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

### **Expressive Arts and Design**

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials.

The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency,



repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

(See Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021, p.8-10)

In addition, we follow:

- a blend of the Living Difference and Understanding Christianity religious education schemes,
- a P.E. programme involving outside and inside activities - including gymnastics, games, athletics and dance,
- music taken from the Music Express scheme used throughout the school and
- Personal, Health and Social Education.

Many of the above areas are also included in the topic work we cover in class.

Computers are used in the ICT suite, along with a range of other technology, such as programmable robots called Beebots, microphones, cameras and iPads with age appropriate coding, maths and phonics games. These are all accessible during child initiated time and the adults also use them with children.

### **Approaches to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage**

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. Parents are a child's primary educator and their importance cannot be over-emphasised. However, we recognise that parenthood as well as being the most important and rewarding jobs we can do, can also be the most frustrating and challenging. We believe in working together, home and school, to share experiences, interests, learning opportunities and ideas. From this joined up approach we use the children's interests, stages of development and past experiences to shape our curriculum that will continually change to reflect the children attending the setting.

We have been influenced by, and take inspiration from, many approaches and theorists including Piaget, Reggio, Steiner and Montessori. Modern day practices from The Curiosity Approach, Hygge Approach, Julian Grenier and Alistair Bryce-Clegg and Planning in the Moment have also shaped how we work, develop our curriculum and evolve as a setting.

Learning through play is at the heart of the setting. The environment is set up to entice the children to lead their own play and have time to develop their own ideas. These opportunities are key in children developing the characteristics of effective 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

**Learning in Reception at Andrews' Endowed CE Primary School**

- Learning experiences consist of a combination of child-initiated (play-based) and adult-led learning.
- Adults take children's interests and strengths as a starting point, seeing each child as a competent learner.
- Parent involvement is crucial. We view our children through a holistic lens, taking into account their experiences both in and outside of school. As part of our transition, we take the time to visit each child in their preschool setting, as well as undertaking home visits. Parental support and high quality home learning environment makes a huge difference to our children.

**Design of the Curriculum**

We use tools such as Development Matters and the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework to ensure that our curriculum covers all the essential early skills in number, phonics and early writing, but the way we teach these is specifically tailored to our learners.

**Our Curriculum Aspirations**

Our aspirations are ambitious. They provide an overview of many of the different things we would like our children to know and be able to do by the time they leave us.

The aspirations are adaptable to the particular children on roll. We offer scaffolding and extra support to help every child to access the curriculum and to ensure they make progress through it. However, we recognise that children will progress through the curricular goals at different rates. We plan carefully to ensure that our curriculum is as inclusive as possible, and that all children will be supported to achieve their best outcomes.

**Enabling Environment**

Our EYFS staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. The staff use key themes, the seasons, key events and the children's interests to draw up medium term plans. In addition to this the children lead the short term activity planning on a day to day basis. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning.



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 foundation year in school the children's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the Early Learning Goals.

### **The Learning Environment**

The learning environment in the Foundation Stage is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative and show curiosity etc. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom area. The free flow between the inside and the outside has a positive effect on the children's development and self esteem. 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. Every day there is a clear literacy and number focus where the children learn new skills through adult directed activities. "Talk for Writing" is used throughout to enhance storytelling and the structure of the children's writing. Phonics is taught daily for 30 minutes, following the "ELS approach". Opportunities to read, write and use mathematical knowledge are evident throughout the day, through adult focused activities and within the environment where children can independently apply what they have been taught.

### **Balance of adult-directed and child-initiated learning**

In order to provide high-quality experiences for young children we aim for a balance of adult directed activities and child-initiated activities. Through adult-led activities we introduce children to new ideas, provide rich opportunities for them to develop their skills and ensure that they experience all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). We balance the adult-led learning with time and opportunity for the children to explore their own ideas, play with resources and use their imagination and creativity. It is only through doing this and practising the skills that they have learned, that children will be able to take ownership of their learning and be able to apply it in different situations.

### **Assessment in the Foundation Stage**

**"Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process.**

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021, p.18)

Assessment plays a crucial role in both children's learning and our curriculum. Most of the assessment is formative in nature and occurs either during teacher-led activities or through observations during child-initiated 'Curiosity Time'. This approach allows us to promptly intervene and positively impact children's learning. We monitor children's progress using 'Objective Led Planning' (Alaistair Bryce-Clegg), which enables us to trace their advancement in Literacy and Mathematics. However, we aim to have a comprehensive understanding of their development across all seven areas of learning.

To achieve this, our staff documents significant 'wow' moments through observations, which are then shared with parents via Class Dojo. We compile tangible evidence of these moments in our floor books, which serve as dynamic records showcasing the diverse curriculum areas they engage with throughout the year.





Additionally, we utilise our class tracker to monitor children's growth, updating it at key intervals during their time in reception. This allows us to evaluate their progress against our curriculum objectives. Collaborating with the EYFS team, senior leaders analyse this data to tailor interventions for individual children or groups when necessary. Rigorous internal and external moderation processes ensure the accuracy of our assessments and guide appropriate actions. The practitioner talks about their observations and what they think it shows about the child. We discuss what the child knows, what they can do, and any barriers to learning. In collaboration with the team the practitioner then decides what action to take next in order to support the child's learning.

Our Assessment objectives:

- Dialogue with parents, so that we can work in a respectful partnership to support children's learning at home and in school
- Dialogue with children, focused on how they learn, to promote metacognitive thinking
- Early identification of children who may require extra help, and children who have special needs. Consistent tracking of these children through half-termly pupil progress meetings with the Headteacher
- Checking that individual children, and groups of children are making good progress, and taking prompt action where this is not the case
- Reporting formally to parents and to the receiving year one teacher in the summer so that children can continue their learning journey through the primary phase

Safeguarding and 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. The safeguarding and welfare requirements, specified in this section, are designed to help providers create high quality settings which are welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- Inviting a dental nurse to visit the class and share important information.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

# Andrews' Endowed Church of England Primary School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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### Control Box

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### Associated Policies, Documents, Agencies:

Equalities Policy

SEND Policy

Assessment Policy

Curriculum Policy