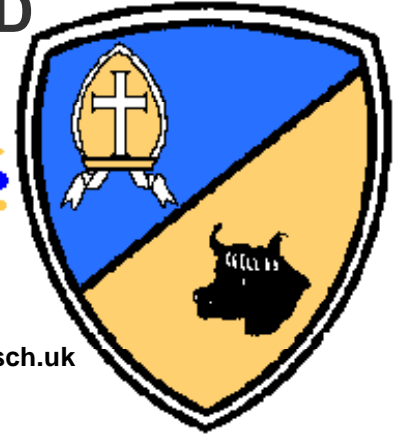


ST. LUKE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL



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ST. LUKE'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL EARLY YEARS POLICY

Date of Policy – 2009

Review Date - 2012

Who wrote the policy?

This policy was drawn up by the Foundation Stage/ Key Stage One leader, in consultation with the Early Years staff and the Head teacher, having due regard to advice from Wigan Early years advisers and OFSTED requirements, the philosophy and practice of national guidance including the Statutory Framework and Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage¹ and advice on education in the primary sector.²

Purpose

This policy reflects the Christian ethos of the school and its values and philosophy in relation to teaching and learning in the Early Years. It sets out a framework in which the teaching and non-teaching staff can operate and gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. It is intended to help us to monitor and evaluate our practice.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the Curriculum Guidance, which sets out in more detail what the children and practitioners will do.

This document is also intended to communicate our philosophy and practice to others (e.g. parents, governors, colleagues, new staff members, students, inspectors and LEA Advisers).

What is meant by 'Early Years'?

At St Luke's 'Early Years' refers to children within the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One, (ages 4-7 years).

Rationale

At St Luke's we believe that:

- Every child matters. We want every child to achieve his/her full potential.
- Young children are individuals. They learn in different ways, favouring different learning styles and progress at different rates. As a staff we will adapt our teaching

¹ 'The Early Years Foundation Stage' Setting the Standards for Learning, Development and Care for children from birth to five dfes 2007

² Every Child Matters: Change for Children in Schools' dfes 2004 (also incorporated into the EYFS)

styles to suit individual children, providing a multi-sensory approach to learning, building on what the children already know and can do.

- All aspects of children's learning and development are equally important and are interdependent.
- Young children are naturally keen and inquisitive, and learn best through being involved in practical, first-hand experiences, which are interesting and enjoyable.
- Young children deepen their understanding by playing.
- Children need opportunities to talk, plan, observe, question, experiment, test, repeat, reflect, and respond to adults and each other.
- When parents and carers and practitioners work together in partnership it has a positive effect on children's learning and development.
- Children need a well-planned and resourced curriculum to take their learning forward and to provide opportunities for them to succeed.

The principles which guide the work of all early years practitioners in the *Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage* are grouped into four themes:

- **'A unique child** - every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive relationships** - children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
- **Enabling Environments** - the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- **Learning and Development** - children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.' (para.1.4)

These principles are in agreement with St Luke's philosophy for the whole of our Early Years (Foundation Stage/ Key Stage One).

Aims

We aim to encourage the children to become independent learners who:

- have positive attitudes to learning and are happy to be in school;
- are curious, talking about their experiences, raising questions and seeking reasons;
- are confident to try new things and are willing to learn from their mistakes;
- will persist until they have satisfactorily completed an activity;
- can work co-operatively, interacting with other children and adults;
- can follow instructions and remain on task;
- develop their own thinking skills and are learning how to learn for themselves;
- are able to take some control of their own learning;
- know how to be healthy and safe;
- are aware of the class expectations and consequences.

As a staff we want to provide the children with a sound foundation in preparation for progress in Key Stage Two and life long learning. In order to do this we aim to:

- offer the children a broad, balanced and meaningful curriculum in response to observation and assessment of the children's developmental needs and interests, making use of both the indoor and outdoor environment when possible;
- find out where each child is and what they need in order to develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding in all areas of experience;
- establish and maintain good relationships with parents/ carers, encouraging them to support their child's learning;

- provide an environment that is safe, warm and welcoming; is clean, bright, stimulating, interactive, well-resourced, accessible and clearly labelled with defined areas; has a wide range of continuous provision to promote independence and incidental learning, through opportunities to experiment and investigate materials and their properties; provides opportunities to do practical activities that support problem solving; has interactive displays that the children are involved in creating and using;
- ensure that staff working in the Early Years team are aware of the importance of considering the welfare and needs of young learners (thus meeting the requirements of the EYFS); are suitably qualified, enthusiastic, committed and supportive of young children and have an understanding of how they learn best; have a flexible approach that is supportive of the different learning styles the children may have; use a mixture of open and closed questions and actively encourage children to formulate their own questions, rather than just answering them;
- promote children's thinking skills using the 'Thinking Hats' approach to allow them to think more comprehensively and 'manage their mind' ;³
- have a clear and consistent approach to behaviour throughout the department
- involve all staff in continuous professional training, and provide support through in-house or outside agency courses;
- ensure all staff are sensitive to children's needs and know when to intervene and when to stand back and observe, allowing children to reach some conclusions themselves;
- ensure adequate supervision is provided for students, other inexperienced staff, and volunteers.

Curriculum planning

In the Reception class at St Luke's we plan in relation to the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation stage. We actively work towards promoting all six areas of learning within the Learning and Development Requirements covered in the **Early Learning Goals** and educational programmes which we provide (as specified in pages 11-16 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage). The six areas of learning are concerned with: **Personal, Social & Emotional development; Communication, Language and Literacy; Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy; Knowledge and Understanding of the World; Physical development; Creative Development**. These later lead into the National Curriculum as the children reach Key Stage One.

The school also operates a creative curriculum based on Key Skills to help improve achievement as children make more connections between their learning. Medium (approximately half a term- one term) and short-term planning (weekly plans) are drawn and developed from the long term curriculum overview, but weekly and daily planning is also informed by observation, assessment and evaluation (see below).

Monitoring and assessment

Monitoring and assessment of the children's progress is an integral part of daily life in the Foundation Stage. Ongoing incidental observations and assessments are kept of the children's involvement in specific activities. Children's achievements (their levels of progress and attainment) are recorded and used to inform future planning, thus ensuring that the needs of the individual children are met. We compile the Foundation Stage Profile and use the e-Profile version on the computer to assist in data analysis of value added.

Children in Key Stage One complete regular assessments at the end of units of work as well as external assessments such as NFER and SATs. Continuous monitoring is done through

³ 'The Six Thinking Hats' Dr Edward de Bono

observation, marking and questioning. Results from these are analysed to identify future areas for development.

As well as assessing the children to plan next steps in their learning staff at St Luke's are committed to assessing and evaluating their own practice. Monitoring and evaluating may be carried out by curriculum coordinators, the Senior Leadership Team, or LA advisors. Each class also evaluates its own practice regularly to monitor areas of learning or provision to identify what is working well or may need changing; this evaluation may then be shared with other colleagues in the team informally, or at Key Stage meetings to assist in developing good practice.

Equal opportunities/ Inclusion

At St. Luke's we provide equality of opportunity. Similarities and differences between people and cultures are explored sensitively. Equal treatment is given to boys and girls, and non-stereotypical behaviour / views are positively encouraged. All children will have equal opportunity to reach their full potential within the Foundation stage and Key Stage 1, regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. Children with special needs are given extra support to allow them to access the full curriculum. We aim to overcome any barriers to learning, e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia, which can hinder children's learning, by following specific programmes to cater for their individual needs.

Related School Policies Underpinning Early Years Policy:

Behaviour Policy
Child Protection (Safeguarding Children) Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy
Health & Safety & Welfare Policy
Special Needs Policy
Employment Handbook for schools

