Grimsargh St Michael's C of E Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Let your light shine before people so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5: v.16)

Inspiring, believing and achieving in our loving Christian community

'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'. Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021

Aims

The school's aim is to develop the children intellectually, socially, morally, spiritually, physically and culturally within a caring, supportive and stimulating environment, based on the values of the Christian faith, taking into consideration each child's needs, abilities and interests.

The Christian Community

In the Christian community of St Michael's, we recognise the worth and potential of individual pupils as children of God. It follows therefore that we:

- Recognise their unique nature as human beings, regardless of background, abilities, physique or experiences;
- Recognise that each individual reflects facets of the goodness of Christ and that there is potential for good in each and every human being;
- Promote the concepts of self- discipline and responsibility for actions undertaken, with the good of all in mind;
- Promote the ideal of love - both of God and of each other as fellow Christians and members of the family of Christ.

With constant reference to our Mission Statement, we at St Michael's aim to foster within the individual child a feeling and awareness of self- worth and value for themselves and others, and to engender the Christian values of love, care, trust, honesty, forgiveness, respect, consideration and responsibility.

Our principle for Early Years

'Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives, it is not just a preparation for the next stage – it is vitally important in itself'. (Quality First- Wiltshire LEA)

Throughout this document, reference to Early Years will refer to children who are in Reception class, working pre-National Curriculum, following the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – 2012.

This policy reflects the school values and philosophy in relation to Early Years practice at Grimsargh St. Michael's CE School. It is in line with the Mission Statement of the school. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate and gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. This document is available for all teaching and non-teaching staff and governors. Copies of this policy can be requested from the school office by any parents of children in this school who may wish to see it.

The overarching aim of the Early Years Policy at our school is to promote the principles of the EYFS Statutory Framework (revised 2021) as well as the non-statutory guidance from Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2020, alongside our children's interests. This allows us to build a rich and stimulating curriculum for our children to provide them with a breadth of essential knowledge and many exciting opportunities, enabling them to be readily prepared for the National Curriculum in Year 1 and their future learning.

We also hope that our EYFS environment enables the following:

- To provide opportunities for children to learn and develop attitudes, skills, knowledge, understanding and a foundation for living
- To involve parent, teacher and child in the learning process
- To value each individual so that his/her learning can be recognised, extended, enriched and evaluated
- To provide a secure and stimulating environment
- To enable each child to learn and discover by first-hand experience and investigation
- To recognise that what children can do is the starting point in their education
- To provide an integrated learning experience
- To enable children to aim high, and achieve at their own rate, working towards the Early Learning Goals (ELG's).

<u>The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is based upon four principles:</u>

1. Children's **learning and development** occurs in different ways and at different rates
2. Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
4. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**

<u>Learning and Development</u>

<u>Characteristics of Effective Learning</u>

Through observations, we will discover children's interests and assess what children know, informing our future planning. Also, fundamental to our practice, is to assess how children learn and it is our duty to report to parents their children's individual dispositions and attitudes to learning. This will be assessed using the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' which are:

- *Playing and exploring* – engagement. Children investigate and experience things and events around them and 'have a go'.
- *Active learning* – motivation. Children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve.
- *Creating and thinking critically* – thinking. Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different and experiences and develop strategies for doing things.

EYFS Areas of Learning

At Grimsargh St. Michael's we recognise that children are individual. They all 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 and cross-over. The children have time and freedom to become deeply involved in the activities and their learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is organised into 7 key areas:

Prime Areas:

- Personal Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

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 independent activities. Through play and practical experiences, children learn about the world and their place in it. They learn through first hand experiences, talk, books and equipment.

We set realistic, yet 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.

Below is a breakdown of each of the 7 areas of learning and key information for each one, including the end of year expectations (Early Learning Goals) that the children will be assessed against.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

At Grimsargh St. Michael's this is one of our most significant areas that runs through all that we do, particularly following the COVID-19 Pandemic and the effects on children and their personal, social and emotional development. We have a strong focus on ensuring that children feel safe, happy, secure, and comfortable. We do this through regular class discussions surrounding our feelings and behaviour, as well as promoting perseverance, resilience, and a growth mindset- one of our school 'Golden Threads'. Children are encouraged to learn to work, share, take turns and co-operate with others. They are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. They are also encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and to respect other cultures and beliefs. Children are enabled to become confident and develop a positive self -image.

End of Reception (ELG):

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.
- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Physical Development

In Reception we follow the Lancashire EYFS scheme of planning and do topics that are in-line with our learning, to bring our learning to life! We continually practise the fundamental skills in reception (jumping, hopping, running, skipping, throwing, catching, balancing, movement), as well as applying those skills to apparatus where possible. We promote safety, health, well-being, and fun throughout our sessions! Children are given opportunities to move to music, use equipment, develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills. They develop an increasing understanding of how their body works and what is needed to be healthy. This is done in both indoors and outdoors and by working with a wide range of resources.

End of Reception (ELG's):

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing.
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.
- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery.
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Communication and Language

This covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundation for literacy skills. Children's developing competence in speaking and listening is focused on. We aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role-play and group discussions. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as working with puppets, participating in music sessions and saying rhymes and singing songs together.

End of Reception (ELG's):

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.
- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, nonfiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher

Literacy

We have a variety of resources for the children to use to help them develop early literacy skills. Children are encouraged to use the mark-making areas indoors and outdoors independently but they also take part in teacher-led

activities. These activities include whole class shared reading, phonics sessions and small group guided reading and writing. The pre-writing work encourages correct pencil control, left/right orientation and cursive letter formation. Children have the opportunity to develop their writing skills in accordance with their age, ability and competence. We encourage children to treat books and other resources with respect and they are given many opportunities to listen to stories told by the staff. We are now aiming for children to be writing independently as much as possible and forming sentences to prepare them for Year 1, inline with the new EYFS framework.

End of Reception (ELG's):

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
- Anticipate (where appropriate) key events in stories.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, nonfiction, rhymes and poems and during role play.
- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.
- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others

Mathematics

At Grimsargh St. Michael's, we follow the NCETM Mastering Number Programme throughout the school to help the children to develop their fluency in maths through a deep understanding of number. We aim for children to achieve mathematical understanding and a firm foundation for numeracy through practical activities and using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas.

End of Reception (ELG's):

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number.
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5.
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.
- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system.
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity.
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Understanding the World (UTW)

All children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate, make decisions and experiment. They will learn about living things, their environment, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives. Children are also given opportunities to develop computing skills and to work with and use modern technology, as well as being able to get information from basic maps, and look at past and present events in history.

End of Reception (ELG's):

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society.
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.

- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.
- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.
- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants.
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama, movement, dance and imaginative play activities. Children are given opportunities to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and to use basic musical instruments. Children also learn new songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other. Colour recognition is taught, in addition to naming colours, mixing paints and sorting and matching. Through various times during the year, children are given the opportunity to participate in school productions and assemblies.

End of Reception (ELG's):

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used.
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.
- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher.
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs.
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and (when appropriate) try to move in time with music.

Unique Child

At Grimsargh St. Michael's we celebrate every child and their individual talents and skills. We know that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates, therefore we have a thorough understanding of each child and the way they learn; and personalise teaching where necessary. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their school and home environments and we begin to build links with the families. We observe how each child learns to gain an understanding of the characteristics they develop to become effective learners. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem.

During their first year at school, the children are introduced to the learning habits. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, co-operative and to use reasoning. Children begin to understand the concept of the growth mindset. They are taught that they can 'grow their brains' so that they understand that everyone can learn with practice and effort. The children are taught how to learn and how to become successful learners.

Inclusion

All children and their families are valued within our school. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or stage of learning. We teach the children that practice and effort lead to learning and improvement! Teachers plan

tasks which enable all children to access the learning and to achieve as highly as possible. In EYFS the children begin to learn to take responsibility for their learning and begin to understand the concept of challenge. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. Planning for children with additional needs is in line with the Special Educational Needs policy that is available on our school website. We also have a fantastic Nurture programme and team to help children who may need some extra support and to help them to flourish.

In the EYFS we have realistic and challenging expectations and 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 through a creative curriculum and learning environment
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities and environments to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which each child's contribution is valued
- monitoring children's progress and taking- action to provide support as necessary It is vital that all children in the school are safe.

Enabling Environment

Our EYFS classroom at Grimsargh holds places for 30 children, and we like to ensure that our areas are well-planned and resourced to ensure a safe, stimulating, engaging and exciting environment in order for children to learn and progress in the best possible way. We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and enhancing the children's development. We acknowledge the potential for learning in every activity and situation that arises, as well as providing as many 'Sticky Learning' opportunities as possible, to make learning authentic, real, and memorable.

Our aim is to provide a secure and stimulating environment in which children flourish and learn to make sense of the real world. We make the children feel valued and give them the confidence to become active and independent learners. Our activities provide first hand experiences through play and discussion, where children are encouraged to interact with others, to move about and explore a wide variety of learning situations. There are well-planned areas of provision in the wide range of activities, resources and materials available. Opportunities are provided for sustained activity and continuous provision, as well as spontaneous, self-chosen activities. It is important to us that children experience success, have fun and enjoy themselves whilst learning. The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment. Equipment and resources are accessible and can be located and used independently by children. The enclosed outdoor spaces are secure and offer children the ability to explore a different environment, presenting them with different challenges and experiences. Activities are planned throughout the learning environment to help the children develop in all areas of learning.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most important educators and we aim for the school and parents and carers to work closely in order to achieve the best outcome for the children. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge. We take pride in developing a positive working relationship between parents and carers and the school, and we promote regular communication to instil this. We operate an open-door policy, allowing parents and carers to discuss any issues and concerns freely, or communicate any messages to us when needed. We also have the App 'Seesaw' that allows fast and simple communications, as well as receiving any important messages from the teacher too. We also use this App to post and celebrate any pictures or comments of fantastic things children have done out of school or any home learning, again, keeping the contact and relationship positive.

If there are any issues, or alternatively any celebrations (wow moments!) in school, we will be available at the gates at the beginning and end of the day to communicate with you. We send home a weekly newsletter each Friday to discuss what your child has been learning about that week, and to discuss what next week will bring. The newsletter will also contain any important information for yourselves, or any upcoming dates or reminders, as well as celebrating 'Stars of the Week'.

We hold parent's meetings in the autumn term to discuss how our children have settled in, and to discuss how learning takes place in EYFS and how parents and carers can support their child's learning. We will also hold a parents' meeting in the spring term to discuss individual children's progress. We send out a written report in the summer term which includes information about the children's attainment against the Early Learning Goals (ELG's). At the end of the year, we will send all children home with their Learning Journey- a celebration of their work over the year, as well as their writing books and any other work they have been doing.

Staff develop good relationships with all children through our key worker groupings, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. Staff are fully qualified, have a wide range of experience and expertise in working with and educating children. The staff are committed to professional development and attend up-to-date training courses and have excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and child development. The EYFS staff plan and work together to ensure continuity and progression, providing age related activities to suit all of our children. They are taught in a variety of ways: in whole class groups, small group work, pairs and individually. As the children's learning develops they are differentiated into groups for the specific teaching of phonics, number and motor skills. We are dedicated to providing excellent pastoral care and education to those children in our care.

Curriculum

By following the EYFS framework each child should be able to make maximum progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. Children are assessed against the ELG and are said to be either; working at expected level, below expected level, or above expected level. Children whose achievements exceed the ELGs will be provided with opportunities which deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills within the EYFS framework. Children who are emerging may require continued support for achieving all or some of the ELGs in Year 1.

The EYFS curriculum is delivered through play. Through play activities the child is encouraged to experiment, to explore, to be imaginative and creative and to plan, implement and reflect upon his/her experiences. Play helps the child to think, to increase his/her understanding and to improve language competence. There is potential for learning in a whole range of play activities. Many experiences provided will bring together several areas of learning and development.

Adult involvement is by observation, participation, commenting or questioning as appropriate and will aim to extend and enhance the child's learning and development. Staff plan using the children's interests as well as focus activities which are adult led. Observations of play are used for assessment and as a basis for future planning.

Planning

- Is centred around the interests of the children
- Responds to the assessed needs of the individual and groups of children
- Meets these needs by identifying the knowledge, skills, attitudes and concepts we want the children to learn
- Builds upon the children's past experiences and relates to their stage of development
- Reinforces previous learning and extends and develops it
- Ensures continuity and progression for each child
- Ensures a broad and balanced curriculum
- Takes account of the ELGs

Baseline Profile and Assessment

A baseline profile is built up on entry to school through the use of RBA (Reception Baseline Assessment) materials. We also conduct our own assessments based on information gathered from the children, parents, nurseries and observations, resulting in an understanding of each individual child as a whole, and a starting point for our teaching and learning in reception class. The children are then assessed termly against objective checkpoints, and we address any issues with appropriate intervention to support the children with their understanding and minimise gaps where possible. Finally, children will be assessed against the EYFS Statutory Early Learning Goals in the summer term which is done using the Lancashire Tracking online assessment document.

Parents/ carers are informed of their child's progress at parents' evenings and in their annual report- a written summary of the child's progress against the ELG is contained within. Specific individual concerns and needs are discussed as and when they occur and all parties can then work together to overcome them.

Our Learning Environment

In Early Years we have an indoor and outdoor environment which the children access freely. We aim to provide an environment which:

- is happy, safe and secure to help the development of the child's self- esteem and self confidence
- is stimulating, offering a range of opportunities for play and displays of children's work and photographs of children at play
- is well organised with areas and resources clearly labelled and easily accessible by the children
- is well modelled so that children are aware of the objective in each area of provision and the enhancement provided
- offers sufficient space for the children to move about freely, develop their independence and make choices for themselves
- reflects and respects the backgrounds and cultures of all the children whilst presenting positive, non-stereotypical images of boys and girls – see Equal Opportunities Policy.

Our Induction Process

During the summer term, prior to starting school the following September, the following visits and meetings will be conducted by our team:

- Parents' meeting and discussion led by reception teacher, reception teaching assistant, headteacher and SEN/nurture lead in the school hall or outdoor classroom to introduce the induction process and school procedures, answer any questions, and give parents a brief insight into school life.
- The EYFS teacher and teaching assistant will conduct a home visit to your child in their family home in order to build familiarity, get to know the child and their interests, to meet them in their natural environment, and this also gives an opportunity for the child or parent to ask any questions or voice any concerns they may have, or to pass on any important information. On this visit, you will also receive an induction pack with any necessary resources or information from the class teacher.
- The children will be invited to attend 3 Taster Sessions in June and July in our EYFS classroom. Here they will be able to build familiarity with the setting, their friends, their teachers, and some of the routines that they will experience in September.
- During the first week of September, the children will attend for half-day sessions with half of the class to start with for the first couple of days, then on the 3rd day they will stay over lunchtime where they will meet the other half of their cohort over lunch, before being in for a full day by the end of the first full week. They will then be in full-time moving forward after this first week. Our school day is 8:55am-3:25pm.

Safeguarding

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns, which the school has, will be noted and, if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant agency. The safety of the child is always of paramount

importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available at school for parents to read if they wish and is also on our school website.

Equalities and Disabilities

All pupils in this school are entitled to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum regardless of ability, gender, race and social circumstances. Talented and able children and those with Special Educational Needs are considered and the curriculum adapted to suit all levels of ability. Please see the Equal Opportunities Policy for more detail.

Special Educational Needs

Care is taken to assess the needs of each child by our SEN and nurture lead in school. Should a child have any special need, the parent and teacher will be informed at an early stage. Group and individual help is provided within the school where possible. We have links with various agencies and when necessary their involvement may be required to support certain children. Parents/Carers will always be informed if an outside agency is assisting us to support their child. Please see the Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Talented and Able Policy for more detail.

Signed**: Miss Hannah Lemmings (EYFS Leader)**
Date: **February 2022**
Review Date: **July 2023**
Agreed by the Curriculum Committee**:**