



## **EYFS Strategy**

### **Our Vision**

At Saxton Primary School, our over-arching vision is to have 'good people, doing well'. We believe that this starts as soon as a child joins us in EYFS, and that this gives them a firm foundation for their education and life.

We are dedicated in providing an Early Years education that enables independence, curiosity, creativity and confidence within every child. Our aim is to equip children with the qualities of effective learning, and the skills and knowledge they need to reach their very best potential, instilling a lifelong passion for learning.

Saxton is unique and so our Early Years education is unique too, tailored to meet the individual needs of each individual child. Our Early Years forms part of our EYFS/ KS1 class, and we secure a flexible and adaptive environment, along with skilful teaching, to form a socially collaborative classroom across the year groups.

We do this by:

- *Providing high quality interactions whereby every child is listened to so that they know they have a voice, feel heard and know that they can make a difference.*
- *Encouraging all children to value and respect themselves, each other and their environment.*
  - *Motivating children to learn through rich experiences; providing learning that is fun, engaging and suitably challenging.*
  - *Providing a nurturing environment that develops children's curiosity and creativity.*
    - *Building strong partnerships with our families.*
    - *Instilling our vision, values and ethos through our Christian faith*

We are committed to giving our children the best possible start in life enabling them to be lifelong learners with a love of learning!

### **How this works**

At Saxton, our curriculum is based upon the statements in 'Birth – 5 Matters' to ensure that we have a progressive approach to the delivery of the full EYFS framework, so that our children achieve the Early Learning Goals and are ready for the KS1 curriculum.

Our Early Years strategy is implemented through a balance of child-led, adult-initiated, adult-supported and collaborative group teaching, alongside an enabling and enriched environment, within the context of a mixed age class. Themes are developed to inspire children's learning, and children are encouraged to develop their own ideas and direction of learning in a way that interests them. At times, there will be some direct teaching from the teacher or other adult. At other times, learning will be through investigation and creative play.

### **Positive Relationships**

Our highly effective practitioners work with children in the environment to ensure best outcomes for all children. They have a good knowledge of children's next steps so they can extend their learning



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during play. High quality interactions enable the adults to facilitate opportunities for children to learn and support their progress. This is done in a variety of ways:

- Communicating and interacting
- Modelling language
- Demonstrating how to do something
- Explaining why something is as it is
- Showing children something
- Exploring ideas with children
- Encouraging the children to have a go
- Questioning them and developing their critical thinking
- Checking what it is they understand
- Model “being stuck” and learning from mistakes
- Providing a narrative for what they are doing
- Facilitating what they are doing
- Encourage collaboration
- Enable children to see each other as tools for learning as well as the adults.
- Setting challenges
- Praising and reinforcing positive learning experiences

Within these interactions, we ensure each child feels valued, important, interesting, capable and challenged alongside gaining knowledge, skills, attitude and understanding, therefore making progress in one or several areas of the Early Years Curriculum.

### **Enabling Environments**

We are committed to providing a happy, safe and stimulating environment, both indoors and outdoors. The learning environment is constantly reviewed, adapted and changed to ensure that the children have a constant deep level of involvement in their activity.

Children are consulted about their learning environment and given the opportunity to take control of their own learning. They are encouraged to initiate and carry out their own activities and make independent choices and decisions. We enable children to find, use and replace equipment and resources independently, as well as reflect on their own learning. We encourage all children to value and respect themselves, each other and their environment.

The learning environment also enables the children of each year group to revisit, consolidate, extend and challenge their own learning within play. It enables social interactions to happen across ages, developing teamwork and positive relationships.

### **Phonics**

In Early Years we have a rigorous approach to teaching phonics, which begins as soon as children start in our school. Our school follows the Sounds-Write phonics scheme, which informs our planning and practice. Staff are trained on this approach and are monitored to ensure it is consistent and successful. Children can be identified quickly if they have gaps in their phonic knowledge and additional support is put in place. This may happen as an extension to a phonics lesson, or at another



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time in the day. Children read books matches to the children's secure phonic knowledge. These decodable books are taken home to encourage children to read with their family too and share their success. Children also choose a real book to take home to support their vocabulary and comprehension through access to a diverse range of books.

### **Parents in Partnership**

Parents and carers are fundamental in their children's development and learning, therefore we actively seek to learn from them and share with them all aspects of their child's learning.

We foster this relationship through:

- Talking to parents/ carers before the child starts and inviting them in for a visit.
- Gaining further information about the child before they start with us – their interests; friends; family; learning etc.
- An ethos of openness and honesty, that encourages parents/ carers to share their knowledge, understanding, hopes and concerns with us.
- Opportunities to find out more information about the family and value their personal history.
- Sharing and celebrating all our learning – through children's learning and achievements; emails; Facebook posts; home learning.
- By listening to and offering support to families, identifying parents that may need extra support and ensuring parents engage with their children at home.
- Encouraging parents and carers to join us in events at school e.g. Christmas Activity morning; Science Week; Open Classrooms; church services.

### **Impact:**

We believe that the impact of our EYFS strategy results in children having the best possible start in life. This is reflected in children who are happy, confident and motivated to learn.

We get to know our children quickly, gaining as much information as possible to understand their prior learning, ensure progress and enable any support they may need from the minute they start at Saxton School.

We measure progress and children's learning across the year through high quality observations of the child's knowledge, skills, attitude and understanding during their play. With our secure understanding of child development, we are then able to sequence children's learning, building on learning over time, ensuring every child makes good progress. Individual children's learning and development is at the forefront of our assessment, enabling professional discussions to take place and highlighting support plans, monitoring and challenge within our curriculum to meet the needs of our children. Progression steps are mapped out for each child, highlighting their strengths and areas for development, and ensuring coverage within the EYFS areas of learning. Evidence of children's learning can also be seen in our use of floorbooks. The judgements at Saxton are moderated with Monk Fryston School, and with other schools in our MAT.



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The teaching and pedagogy of our Early Years is reviewed and evaluated regularly, ensuring the needs of each individual cohort are being met. Team meetings are held with Monk Fryston in order to reflect and develop our Early Years practice. Early Years provision is on the school development plan and EYFS teaching and learning is evaluated regularly by the EYFS lead, Headteacher and Governors.