



# The Federation of Middleham VA and Spennithorne VC CE Primary Schools

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

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

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes.

### A Unique Child

At Middleham CE (VC) and Spennithorne CE (VA) Primary School, 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 and 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.

### Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Middleham CE (VC) and Spennithorne CE (VA) Primary School are treated fairly whatever their 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 boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, those from all social and cultural 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;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Planning challenging activities for children linking to their next steps;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- Identifying any need for additional support.
- Valuing and respecting all children and families equally.

### Welfare

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 wellbeing of all children.

At Middleham CE (VC) and Spennithorne CE (VA) Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection 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 all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for 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.

### Positive Relationships

At Middleham CE (VC) and Spennithorne CE (VA) Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships.

We aim to build positive relationships by:

- Developing a caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.
- Providing clear and consistent boundaries.
- Being supportive of the child's own efforts and independence.
- Being sensitive and responsive to the child's needs, feelings and interests.

### Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school through an informal meeting at school.
- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the Rabbits class before starting school.
- Operating an open door policy for parents with any queries.
- Using an online learning journal, Tapestry, to allow parents to regularly view their child's work and activities.
- Offering the opportunity for parents to upload observations from home and comment alongside their child's work on Tapestry.
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation evenings per year.
- Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year.
- Regular meetings with our feeder pre-schools, pre-preps and nurseries to discuss each individual child and aid their transition process into school.

### Enabling Environments

At Middleham CE (VC) and Spennithorne CE (VA) Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation, we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. Enabling environments value all people and learning. We offer stimulating resources, relevant to all the children's cultures and communities whilst supporting children to take risks and explore.

### Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS is based on the Development Matters statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. These plans are flexible so that teachers can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning. 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 and challenges. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. These observations are recorded using an online learning journal, Tapestry. At the end of the reception year, the child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

## The Learning Environment

The classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc. It has defined learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. With an enclosed outdoor area, children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for discovering in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside the classroom, enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

## Learning and Development

At Middleham CE (VC) and Spennithorne CE (VA) Primary School, we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often 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.

### Prime Areas:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

### Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

## Teaching and Learning style

We recognise that features of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching.
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS.
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence.
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations.

## Play

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences which helps 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 and re-enact situations pertinent to themselves in controlled and safe

