

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

St John's C of E Primary School



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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced EYFS 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

2. Legislation

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

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Structure of the EYFS

Our Early Years setting at St John's C of E Primary School caters for 4 and 5-year-old children once they have left preschool and before they start the National Curriculum in Year 1. Our Early Years curriculum follows the EYFS framework for learning in the early years where children will be working towards the Early Learning Goals. We provide a balanced curriculum of indoor and outdoor continuous provision in addition to teacher/adult led planned activities to enable children to develop, learn and make excellent progress. We regularly assess children's learning in order to ensure children are making sustained progress over time.

Our Early Years teaching aims;

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development;

- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Collective Worship and Spirituality in the Early Years

- This is an essential part of the ethos of the school and is therefore integral to what we say and how we behave in Reception. Our Christian Values are at the very heart of what we do and all our behaviour management is built on these three values: Love, Courage and Respect. We also promote these values with weekly certificates awarded at our Celebration Collective Worship.



Love, Courage and Respect

- At the start and the end of the day we say age related prayers which are personalised to St John's and throughout the year we introduce other prayers such as the candle lighting prayer, the school prayer and the Lord's Prayer.
- We hold a shortened version of the school Collective Worship which includes an adapted Gospel story and prayers in our own year group for the first half term and then after that, we go into the hall and take part in Collective Worship with the rest of the school, which includes singing.
- Every class base within the unit also has a Spirituality Space with a bible, a cross, simple religious books, a personalised candle, a prayer tree with all their names on, a variety of three different prayer pebbles (Sorry, Please and Thank you). These are all placed on a cloth, the colour of which changes with the liturgical year colours.
- Within our curriculum we celebrate the religious festivals and create window displays of our work.



4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Activities are planned to enable children to access learning which is pitched at an appropriate level to provide stimulating and challenging learning. Open ended tasks are also planned to offer a broad array of outcomes from the children.

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible. By the Summer Term in Reception the children will experience many more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to Year 1.

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between Child Initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities is very important to us.



As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

5. Assessment

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and, where possible, in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Ongoing formative assessment for the EYFS at St John's is continuous over the year. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. This 'knowledge of the child' helps staff to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies all of which come together in their Learning Journeys. We are very proud of our Learning Journey books: these are collections of children's work, which create a detailed picture of the child's progress. Where appropriate, we include individual next steps for children's learning and follow the whole school marking policy based on the Independence Triangle. The next steps are discussed by the EYFS team in informal meetings after school each day and in the weekly planning meetings, these next steps inform planning for the next day and week ahead. We also use a folder to collect a bank of evidence of the children's child-initiated work and work from adult directed tasks. This could be in the form of drawings, maths, writing and art work. This evidence helps to determine the level of achievement across a wide range to the ELGs (Early Learning Goals). In addition, we use Tapestry (an online Learning Journal) to collect photos and record detailed descriptions of activities, learning opportunities and assessments. This online journal provides evidence and assessment opportunities to support children achieving the expected and exceeding levels of development for the EYFS curriculum. It also encourages parents to become involved in their learning via phones, tablets and computers view learning taking place at school. Parents can also comment on the entries and add their own photos of their child's achievements outside school. Under the guidance of the EYFS profile assessment should not distract staff away from meaningful interactions with children and should not over burden staff with extra workload. The aforementioned assessment practices are an important part of our approach and support information for assessment that is drawn from anecdotal evidence based upon an in-depth knowledge of each child from observations and interactions. All of these assessment strategies combine to provide robust judgements to enable staff to provide next steps for children's learning to support their ongoing progress.

6. Working with parents

At St John's we believe that parents and carers are a child's first educators and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. Throughout the year we offer parenting workshops in Phonics and reading and other aspects such as support for home with sleeping and anxiety etc.

When a child gains a place at St John's Primary School, they are invited to Chat and Chill sessions at the school to meet other parents and their new friends, we visit them at their current Preschool and ask them to attend a Stay and Play session at the school alongside all other children who will be starting and with their parents. We also hold our 'Nursery Rhyme Project' to help with their transition where children stay at school for around 2 hours on their own. We invite parents to stay on site and get to know each other take at a High Tea in the Library which is hosted by the PTA. Before school starts we will conduct several Home Visits, which enables us to see the child and their parents in the comfort of their own home and helps them to feel more comfortable with us. Over the first few days at the school, we encourage parents and carers to stay for a short while, if necessary, in the classroom to ensure the transition to the school goes smoothly. In some cases, we will use a reduced timetable initially to aid this process for individual children. Parents are invited to attend a Parents' Meeting in the Autumn and Spring term and teachers are available morning drop off and afternoon pick up times to talk and to discuss more urgent matters.

Every opportunity staff have to interact with parents and carers is valued and staff work in partnership to ensure each child's family feels secure, well informed and integrated into the school community.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance and there is a section in our school Safeguarding Policy that directly refers to practice in the EYFS. It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's learning journeys, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.

We are a healthy school and our children receive free fruit and milk from a Government scheme. Our staff model good eating habits by eating alongside the children. All children are given the opportunity to have a packed lunch or a school dinner, although the vast majority continue to eat a school lunch. We have a kitchen on site which no child is allowed to enter and it is secured with a safety door.

We take all accidents seriously and always log and phone home immediately if a child bangs their head. We have cold compresses stored in the adjacent room to Year R. We encourage all children to start school without nappies but will support any children struggling with this. We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' (i.e. wet themselves) and have stocks of spare clothes and change anyone who needs it. We ask parents to help keep our stocks of clothes high by returning anything their child has borrowed. All large climbing equipment is checked by our site officer and fire alarms are held regularly in line with whole school policy. There is an annual external check of equipment. We follow whole school procedures for child protection (see separate policy Carolyn Wilkinson (Head Teacher) Gemma Havey (Deputy Head Teacher and Inclusion Leader), Suzanne Schneider (Senior Teacher) and Daphne Rose (Behaviour Lead) are the named DSL (Designated Safeguarding Leaders) and all concerns are discussed with one of these people. We have separate policies for medicine in school and off-site visits.

We follow [statutory guidance](#) for safety around supervised tooth brushing and hand hygiene.

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

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Carolyn Wilkinson (Headteacher) every year.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix I. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy