



Saint George's
Church of England School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy December 2023

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“All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.”
(EYFS 2024)

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Aims

- This policy aims to ensure:
- We provide a structured, secure, caring and well-resourced learning environment both inside and outside which meets all the individual developmental needs of our pupils and underpins all future learning.
- Our pupils become confident, motivated and happy learners, developing the skills and attitudes necessary for their own successful future learning.
- Pupil's early learning and development takes place within a caring and nurturing environment, in line with the school ethos and values and to ensure the ethos and values are upheld and promoted.
- We develop independence and individuality, whilst fostering respect and thought towards others.
- We develop close working partnerships between parents and carers.

Legislation

This policy is based on the requirements set out in

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/657aed70095987000d95e0e6/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf

which applies from January 2024

Structure of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Saint George's Primary Phase, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. We have two Reception classes within our school, with a maximum of thirty children in each class.





Curriculum

Our school setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS framework that applies from 4th January 2024.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, three areas are known as the Prime areas and are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and an enthusiasm for learning. They also focus on 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 three Prime areas are strengthened and applied through four other areas known as the Specific areas. These are:

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



Planning

The EYFS over-arching principles are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

- A Unique Child - Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and who is resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive Relationships - Children learn to be strong and independent through forming **positive relationships**.
- Enabling Environments - Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Learning and development - Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates.

These principles are the basis for our planning: from our long-term planning overview to our daily responsive planning. Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively, taking into account their starting points and the importance of the cultural capital they need to succeed in life. It is important to respond to children's natural curiosity and this is reflected in our planning and adult engagements.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

The three characteristics of effective learning that are taken into consideration when planning and guiding children's activities are playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically.





Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

At Saint George's Primary Phase we make full use of our outdoor environment during our daily child-initiated sessions and also have a half a day's Forest School session each week. Our Forest School sessions are all led by a teacher who has completed the appropriate Forest School training. As the children grow older and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help prepare them for more formal learning, ready for year one.

Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and carers.

Within the first six weeks that a child starts Reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). Staff will also carry out their own formative assessment to identify each child's development in the prime areas of the EYFS, both to help them as they settle and to give an indication of their starting points.



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During a child's year in Reception, staff will explore what each child can do and consider their next steps. At checkpoints throughout the year, staff will identify those children that are 'on track' to achieve their Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception and those children who are 'not on track'. Planning and teaching is then put in place to support those children to move their learning forward.

At the end of the EYFS staff complete an EYFS profile on each child. Pupils are assessed against the seventeen early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting the expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching the expected levels of development

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and carers of each child. The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other Trust schools to ensure consistent assessment judgements are made. EYFS is submitted to the local authority.





Working with parents and carers

We strongly believe that parents and carers are the children's primary educators. Our philosophy is rooted in two-way communication and full partnerships, from the family's first introduction to our school and beyond.

We recognise the role that parents and carers have played and their future role in educating their children. We support this through:

- Talking to parents and carers about their child before they join our school.
- Visiting pre-schools to discuss individual children and their needs.
- Inviting children due to start EYFS in to school for an activity session and story time.
- Home visits carried out by EYFS staff before the children begin school.
- Inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting in the summer term before their child starts school.
- Further activities, information leaflets, suggested story books etc plus other information available through the website.
- Offering parents and carers the opportunity to follow their child's progress through our on-line journal Tapestry. Parents and carers are encouraged to add their own observations to this journal.
- Encouraging parents and carers to talk to their child's class teacher if they have any concerns. There are formal parents' meetings in terms 1, 2 and 4 to discuss progress with the class teacher. Parents and carers also receive a report on their child's attainment at the end of the academic year. There is also a weekly 'open door' session where parents can look around the classroom with their child.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents and carers, for example; reading cafes, sports day and sharing afternoons.
- Providing opportunities for parents and carers to share children's achievements at home through adding photographs and annotations to Tapestry.





Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

We promote good health including oral health in the EYFS by talking to the children about;

- The effects of eating too many sweets.
- The importance of brushing your teeth effectively.
- Healthy food and drink – we have a snack of fruit, water or milk in school.
- Other factors that impact on being healthy such as keeping active, good hygiene and good sleep routines.

The rest of the safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlines in our school Safeguarding Policy.

Managing Children's Behaviour

Staff promote positive learning behaviours, modelling and making expectations clear and consistent. For further details please see our school Behaviour Policy.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles in this policy. The policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed every two years. The Deputy Headteacher and EYFS Lead will carry out monitoring of the EYFS, along with subject leaders, as part of the monitoring schedule.