



# St John's Church of England Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

**Statutory Guidance** - Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage  
DfE Website - EYFS curriculum

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**Love, Respect, Value**

**St John's Church of England Primary School is committed to high expectations for all and to embracing equality.**

"In Church schools, all members of the learning community should be given the opportunity to make their contribution, and the part each can play should be strongly respected. Children are clearly not there 'to be done to' - they are active partners in their learning."  
John Cox - More Than Caring and Sharing

## **Purpose**

Every child is seen as a unique child of God and from day one of a child's time with us. It is the aim of St John's C of E School to enable every child in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to experience success. We believe that EYFS provides the foundational skills that children need to succeed and thrive. We believe in a play first approach to learning and our skilled teachers and practitioners teach the seven areas of the EYFS through play and meaningful conversation and planned interactions with the children.

*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.*

(Early Years Foundation Stage Profile DFE 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St John's C of E School, children are admitted to Reception in the September following their fourth birthday. Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At St John's C of E School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

## **Aims & Objectives**

We aim to support all children to become independent, collaborative and inquisitive learners. We will provide a broad, balanced, enriching and challenging curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At St John's C of E School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children
- Provide a caring and inclusive indoor and outdoor learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child, including those who have additional needs

The early-years education is based on the following four principles:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- 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.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

## [EYFS Statutory Framework 2023.](#)

The EYFS Framework provides:

- quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- a secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported
  - Seven areas of learning and development and the educational programmes (described below)
- early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the reception year
- assessment requirements (these are ongoing but at the end of Reception we are required to report whether the child has met (expected) the Early Learning Goals or whether they are still working towards them (emerging).

**Planning** The educational programmes set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework provide the basis of our curriculum and planning. Teachers use the national schemes of work, where appropriate, to support their planning for individual children. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. The planning is based upon themes with discrete phonics, maths and reading directed teaching. However, planning, which is based upon a different topic which is identified as a vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement and interest of the children. Our medium-term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes for all children .

When planning, teachers and practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. They must also consider the importance of hands on learning, real life experiences and learning through play.

**Observations** - Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children and reflect on the different rates at which children develop. Observations enable staff to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations may be recorded in the children's Learning Journey, which is on Tapestry.

### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters as a unique child of God. All children at St John's C of E School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

### **Staff**

Reception – 1 class teacher and 1 Teaching Assistant in each class in addition to any necessary Learning Support Assistant. All staff in the Foundation Stage work to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

## **Enabling Environments**

At St John's C of E School we recognise that both the environment and a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. The adults in the classrooms will teach and support the children by responding to each child's individual needs and help them to build their learning over time. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are accessible, safe to use and checked regularly.

## **Learning and Developing**

### **The EYFS Curriculum –**

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

At St. John's we believe that a balance of adult led and child initiated activities is required in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. Three Prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Reception pupils also participate in a daily phonics session where they will be taught to recognise, read and write letter sounds that will help them to read and write.

## **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

Parents receive an annual written report that offers comments on each child's progress in each area of learning and the characteristics of effective learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in early July each year.

The Learning Environment -The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc.

Children have access to both inside and outside areas across the day; this has a positive effect on the children's development. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and in varying scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.' (EYFS Statutory Framework)

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, 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.

Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements. 'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.' (EYFS Statutory Framework) Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions." (EYFS Statutory Framework)

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults will support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

## **Assessment**

During the first term in Reception, children are required to complete The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This is a short assessment that will be carried out on a 1:1 basis with each child. This will be an activity based assessment of the children's starting points in: language, communication and literacy and mathematics. This assessment will then be used to measure progress at the end of Key Stage 2.

In addition to this, the teacher will carry out their own assessments using observations and discussions with parents and children to assess the ability of each child using a baseline procedure. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

At the end of the academic year we record each child's level of development against the seventeen Early Learning Goals as Meeting expected levels or Not yet reaching expected levels (emerging). We make regular assessments of children's learning, using Development Matters, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of informal observations, planned activities and professional judgement. Assessment is completed regularly and is used to inform teachers and parents about their child's progress and development.

Tracking grids are updated at the end of each term. This provides a summary sheet for each child which feeds into the whole-school assessment and tracking process. We record each child's level of development to be: 'On track', 'Not on track' or 'Cause for concern', against the seven areas of learning.

At the end of the final term in Reception we send a summary of these assessments to the Local Authority for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings and in the end-of-year report.

## **Teaching & Learning**

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, carers and other settings that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage
- 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 and self-management
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the Foundation Stage

## **Transition**

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle into their new class quickly and happily.

Starting Reception – Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the Summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Reception curriculum.

This is an opportunity for staff to:

- To go through the school handbook
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Purchase uniform and book bag if requested
- Explain the arrangements for the gradual induction into reception

New class sessions - The children are given three opportunities to come into school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. They will spend a morning in their new class, be invited to a picnic and be invited to attend a storytime. Parents can leave their children during these sessions. This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them. Arrangements are also made for the children's new class teacher to visit them in their current nursery setting and we hold meetings with each child and their carer prior to starting school

September intake - When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply in order that they can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:

- During the first week, children will be invited to attend on their specific first day. We aim to have all the children in over three days
- Children will attend for the full school day unless Foundation staff, Senco and families agree that it is not in the best interests of an individual child

Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1) - Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school Collective Worships as well as sharing playtimes with the Key Stage 1 children. Children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend a morning in their new class during the summer term.

## **Safeguarding & Welfare**

'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.'

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2021)

At St John's C of E School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence
- Promote good health
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children
- There will be paediatric trained staff in classrooms, at lunchtime and in Breakfast and After School Club.

Keeping Safe - 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. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See St John's C of E Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Policy).

Good Health - All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times. The curriculum will also aim to teach about good oral health alongside other healthy choices in life.

Intimate Care - "Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that

most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene and it is good practice for the school to provide an Individual Care Plan in agreement with the parents/carers for children requiring intimate care support.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents/carers.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The leadership team will carry out monitoring within the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Pupils and Standards Committee of The Governing Body will also be part of this process.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years and sooner if required.

### **Statutory Guidance**

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DfE Website - EYFS curriculum

- It builds on what our children already know and can do
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers

At St John's C of E 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 a growth mindset approach, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

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

- Making initial contact at our open morning and induction meetings
- Arranging, visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Reception at St John's C of E School
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement
- Inviting parents/carers and children to have the opportunity to spend time in Reception Class for induction visits before starting school
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns
- If Foundation Stage staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them
- Written contact through the Home-School Agreement, Tapestry and school newsletters
- Inviting parents to record home moments on Tapestry to be celebrated in school
- Publishing a Curriculum map detailing the areas of learning and the overarching theme of the term or half-term as well as a class newsletter/termly overview
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading



- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers
- Offering two parent/teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in Reception
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as Collective Worship,, workshops, outcomes, church services, Christmas productions and sports day etc
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers
- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, to encourage specific collaboration between child, school and parents e.g. reading event, topic outcome events

## Appendix:

### Assessment Early Learning Goals (ELG)

#### **Communication and Language**

##### **ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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.

##### **ELG: Speaking Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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, non-fiction, 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.

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

##### **ELG: Self-Regulation Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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.

##### **ELG: Managing Self Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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.

##### **ELG: Building Relationships Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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**

##### **ELG: Gross Motor Skills Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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.

##### **ELG: Fine Motor Skills Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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, paint brushes and cutlery;
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

#### **Literacy ELG:**

##### **Comprehension Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

##### **ELG: Word Reading Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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.

**ELG: Writing Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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 ELG:**

**Number Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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.

**ELG: Numerical Patterns Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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 ELG:**

**Past and Present Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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.

**ELG: People, Culture and Communities Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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.

**ELG: The Natural World Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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**

**ELG: Creating with Materials Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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.

**ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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.