

ST PAUL'S C of E (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Paul's C of E Primary School

Life in all its fullness

EYFS policy

Created: October 2025

Reviewed:

'Life in all its fullness' John 10:10

- *We nurture a passion for wisdom so everyone can realise their full potential*
 - *We respect and love everyone as individuals*
 - *We celebrate and serve our diverse community*

The three core Christian values of wisdom, love and welcoming community, form the basis of work in our school community

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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.

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage July 2025

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) effective from 1st September 2025.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- ⑩ That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a secure foundation for learning, development and good progress through school and life
- ⑩ Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- ⑩ A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- ⑩ Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

Introduction

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not only a preparation for the next stage but vitally important in itself. For young children there is no distinction between work and play and this underpins our approach in the Reception year at St Paul's.

We aim to provide teaching and learning opportunities of the highest quality to help our children make good progress towards and, where appropriate, beyond the early learning goals.

As we follow our curriculum we aim to respond to the individual needs of the children, their families and the community to secure foundations on which learning can be built. Our approach works to improve outcomes and reflects that it is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, and has opportunities to make a positive contribution.

The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- To build on what children know and can do
- To ensure all children are included regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, activities that provide opportunities for learning indoors and outdoors
- To provide a safe, rich and stimulating environment

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The EYFS curriculum is planned to provide a range of activities and experiences through which children have opportunities to make choices and decisions, manipulate materials, use language for a variety of reasons and receive appropriate adult support and guidance.

There are seven areas of learning and development. The three 'prime areas' are:

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

There are four 'specific areas':

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

No one aspect of learning and development stands alone, they are interconnected and support each other. Together, they address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. This ensures a holistic, child centered curriculum which allows children to make links in what they are learning as adults support them in moving onto their next steps.

We recognise that children learn in different ways and there are three important characteristics of teaching and learning in the EYFS.

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Each child is working towards the **Early Learning Goals**, which most children are expected to achieve by the end of the Reception year. Adults plan a curriculum which will help all children to make good progress towards, and where appropriate beyond, these goals. The learning experiences will offer a balance of adult led and child initiated activities, they will also allow for a variety of learning styles and take different children's needs and interest into account.

Teaching and Learning - active, purposeful learning through play

We believe in using our children's starting points and interests to plan for meaningful play. Children are free to explore, and the adults use their knowledge of each child to extend their learning as appropriate. We want children to become independent learners and so we organise our provision in order that children are able to access resources and make choices both inside and outside. We also want to teach new skills, introduce new concepts and knowledge, and provide a rich cultural capital for each child.

We provide a balance of whole class teaching, small group activities and one to one teaching, child initiated or adult led, in order to meet the needs of all children. This balance is flexible and changes throughout the year in order to help prepare the children for the next phase of their education.

Through play our children explore learning experiences which help them make sense of the world and learn new skills. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside others and on their own, communicating with others as they investigate and solve problems. Adults encourage children to reflect on their own learning.

Adults observe children they are able to sensitively use effective questioning to help move children on in their understanding or persevere with a task. They model skills for the children and they guide the children forward with their learning.

The Reception Class is supported by Teaching Assistants who work very much in collaboration with the Class Teacher. The role is varied and responsive to the children's needs and includes:

- Working with small groups in adult led activities
- Supporting targeted children during whole class teaching
- Conducting Wellcomm (a communication, language and understanding tool) assessments as the children start school, analyzing these and feeding back to the class teacher
- Observing the children at play
- Interacting with the children's play in order to move their learning on towards their next steps, across all areas of learning
- Modelling play. Including and extending children's experiences, skills, knowledge vocabulary through this
- Supporting and working with children who receive Speech and Language Therapy, taking guidance from the Therapist as they visit and work with the children
- Working with children in interventions for Phonics

Outdoor and Indoor Provision

Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors is necessary for children to learn in challenging and enjoyable ways. We value the learning that happens outside and inside equally. We provide opportunities for the children to work with adults both inside and outside, as children learn best when exposed to a variety of environments.

We are constantly developing our classroom, indoors and outdoors in order to support and challenge children as we need to and respond to their interests. We use the outside space daily and the children are free to move between the two for much of the day. We have provided for all areas of learning to be accessed outside, just as we do inside. We encourage all children to bring coats each day but are able to provide suitable clothing if they do not so we can go out in all weathers.

Assessment

At St Paul's, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. 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/or carers.

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:

- ⑩ Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

This information is shared with parents in their child's school report, the Year 1 Class teacher and with the Local Authority. It also forms part of the planning process for the next academic year.

Progress in phonics is assessed each half term, recorded and analysed so that any interventions can be planned for.

Inclusion

We believe that all children matter and that children learn best when they feel safe, known and engaged. We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children so that they make appropriate progress by the end of the Reception year. We achieve this by:

- Observing children and getting to know them and their families so we can plan for opportunities that build on children's knowledge, experience and interests in order to develop self-esteem and confidence
- Giving time and attention to children's emotional, physical and mental well-being. We take a restorative approach to behaviour management in order to develop self-regulation
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to support and motivate children to help them learn effectively
- Monitoring children's progress regularly and taking action to provide support or challenge as appropriate for each child
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies and resources to enable all children to access the curriculum
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Working with outside agencies or seeking extra support as needed

If observations and assessments show that a child may have a special educational need adults are quick to respond by highlighting the need(s), developing a plan, liaising with families and pupils and putting support in place. This plan is then reviewed in line with a whole school cycle.

All adults are aware of the children who receive the Pupil Premium. The progress of all children is discussed during termly Pupil Progress meetings with the Headteacher, provision for those children receiving the Pupil Premium will be discussed and plans made according to individual need(s) or possible barriers to learning.

Staff

Staff training

We will:

- ⑩ Train all staff in safeguarding procedures in line with Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance
- ⑩ Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures
- ⑩ Renew training every 2 years, or more often when it's needed to help maintain skills; keep up to date with any changes to our safeguarding procedures; or because of any safeguarding concerns
- ⑩ Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our child protection and safeguarding policy

Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will:

- ⑩ Provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to all staff
- ⑩ Attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework
- ⑩ Liaise as needed with local statutory children's services agencies and our local safeguarding partners

Safer recruitment

When recruiting staff, we will follow the procedures set out in the latest EYFS framework guidance on checking the suitability of new recruits, including:

- ⑩ Obtaining a reference for any member of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited
- ⑩ Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references

See our safeguarding policy for details of our safer recruitment procedures.

Whistleblowing

We make sure that all staff are aware of our whistleblowing procedures; feel able to raise concerns about any poor or unsafe practice; and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

In the event that a member of staff feels that they need to blow the whistle on misconduct, they should report their concern to the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of the governing board.

See our whistleblowing policy for more detail on our procedures for handling whistleblowing.

Malicious or vexatious allegations

If an allegation is made in good faith, but investigation finds no wrongdoing, there will be no disciplinary action against the member of staff who raised the concern.

If, however, an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the person making the allegation.

Safeguarding

We recognise that 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 safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

If we have concerns about children's safety or welfare, we will immediately notify our local authority children's social care team, in line with local reporting procedures. In emergencies, we will also inform the police. These concerns will then be followed up by our Safeguarding team as set out in our Safeguarding policy.

We also have a DSL who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children. They are also responsible for:

- ⑩ Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSPs (local safeguarding partners)
- ⑩ Providing support, advice and guidance to all other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required
- ⑩ Attending a safeguarding training course that complies with the criteria set out in annex C of the latest EYFS framework

We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils.

Paediatric first aid (PFA) - We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

Absence

We're required to promptly follow up on absences.

If a child is absent for a prolonged time or if their parents/carers haven't told us about the absence, we will attempt to contact the parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts.

See our attendance policy for more on this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report child absences.

Oral health and tooth brushing

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- ⑩ The effects of eating too many sweet things
- ⑩ The importance of brushing your teeth

Safer eating

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate (from a course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the latest EYFS framework). All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating, and seated appropriately.

Before a child joins our setting, we will get information on their:

- ⑩ Dietary requirements and preferences
- ⑩ Food allergies and intolerances
- ⑩ Health requirements

We will share this information with all staff involved in food preparation and handling.

We will make sure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis; the differences between allergies and intolerances; and that children can develop allergies at any time, especially during the introduction of solid foods.

We will consult with parents/carers to:

- ⑩ Create allergy action plans for their child – with the help of health professionals, where appropriate
- ⑩ We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff

We will prepare food in a way that:

- ⑩ Prevents choking
- ⑩ Meets each child's individual developmental needs · Is in line with the DfE's Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance

In the event of a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record details of the incident and make the child's parents/carers aware. We will periodically review the records to identify whether we can change anything in our practice to make eating safer, and then take action as appropriate.

Accident or injury

We keep a first aid box (which contains appropriate items for children) always accessible.

We keep a written record of accident or injuries and any first aid treatment.

We will inform parents or carers the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, of any:

- ⑩ Accident or injury sustained by the child
- ⑩ First aid treatment given

We will notify the relevant authority of any serious accident, illness, or injury to, or death of any child while in our care and inform them of the action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Safety of premises

We make sure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor space, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children we care for and the activities provided on the premises.

We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including fire safety and hygiene requirements.

Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are:

- ⑩ Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- ⑩ An adequate supply of necessary items such as spare clothes
- ⑩ Separate toilet facilities for adults

During toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs. Should nappy changing be required we will put an intimate care plan in place with parents/carers.

Transition to Year 1

Moving onto the next phase of education is an important time for children. As St Paul's is a small school the children may become familiar with the whole staff team from the beginning of their time in Reception. It is understood that these warm and friendly relationships help to ensure a smooth transition to Year 1 later on. As the year progresses, children are able to make regular visits to the Year 1 classroom (or Year1/2) on various occasions including sharing stories.

Plans are made for learning to happen with increasing levels of independence, as appropriate for each child, throughout the Reception year in order to help prepare children for this next step.

The Year 1 teacher receives a copy of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile stating whether each child is meeting expected levels, working towards them or has exceeded them. Time is given to discuss and expand on this information in order for the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective curriculum and for all children to make a successful transition. SEND plans are discussed so that the Year 1 teacher is able to make appropriate provision for each child. Reception and KS1 teachers meet throughout the year for Phonics Progress reviews and moderation which further help the Year 1 teacher understand the progress and needs of each child.

Conclusion

The EYFS aims to provide every child with a rich and diverse experience through a wide range of adult-led and child-initiated activities based on the needs and interests of the children. It is hoped that this will provide a foundation for life-long curiosity and confidence. We believe that the provision within EYFS is line with the vision for our school; to provide a high quality education based on Christian values for all our children in our community. We are ambitious about our learning, proud of our achievements and desire to do the best for ourselves and for the world.