

‘Do Everything In LOVE’ - 1 Corinthians 16 v14

## Early Year Foundation Stage Policy



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<b>Next review (date):</b>	March 2028
<b>Changes made:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction - slight changes to wording</li><li>• Our Approach – updated to reflect 2025 guidance</li><li>• Assessment – section added at the end about EYFS Profile</li><li>• Appendix referring to 2021 Framework removed</li></ul>

## Introduction

We know and believe that children learn to the best of their ability when they feel safe, secure and valued, so we are fully committed to ensuring that positive relationships and an enabling environment are at the heart of our practice. **We aim to make every child's first experience of school happy, positive and fun.**

We recognise that every child is a 'unique child' and will join us with their own special abilities, talents, interests and with different pre-school experiences. Our aim is to build upon these in a meaningful way, **to foster a love of learning and develop enquiring minds.**

We have high expectations for our children and see progress as holistic; we place as much emphasis on children's emotional well-being and personal and social development as on progress in other aspects of learning. **We aim to instil the Characteristics of Effective Learning such as independence, resilience and confidence.**

We encourage parents/carers to participate fully in the life of the school. Our aim in the EYFS is to establish and build positive relationships with parents and carers which last throughout their child's time at St Andrews.

## Early Years Foundation Stage- Our Approach

Our approach is underpinned by providing the children with developmentally appropriate opportunities for learning. This is reflected in the content and structure of the day, particularly the balance of adult-directed to child-initiated learning, including whole-class teaching. **We follow the 2025 statutory framework guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage.**

**We provide a broad and balanced Early Years curriculum:**

- based on first hand experiences and purposeful interactions
- through carefully planned adult and child-initiated activities
- whilst having a regard for the skills and attitudes the Key Stage One curriculum will demand

**We support our children to:**

- collaborate and learn from one another through shared experiences
- set their own challenges in their physical environment and in their learning
- access resources independently
- use their senses to explore and investigate
- develop persistence and positive attitudes to learning

**We highly value play and the learning it brings in itself. Through play 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 thereby developing emotional resilience and self-regulation. Children have the opportunity to think creatively and problem solve alongside others.**

The Early Years Foundation Stage includes seven areas of learning and development. These areas are all-important and inter-connecting. The seven areas are divided into three prime areas and four specific areas.

## Prime Areas

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

The 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. Successful mastery of these skills supports children to achieve well in the specific areas of learning.

### Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

### Planning

At St. Andrew's we use long term plans to ensure our curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced so that it builds sequentially on the children's existing knowledge, skills and understanding. We use broad topic titles to outline the topics we aim to teach in order to ensure the children have had the breadth of experiences they need to obtain the revised Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception and to prepare them for their learning in Key Stage 1. The broad topics have a degree of flexibility so that we can meet the particular needs and interests of each cohort. Medium term plans offer diverse experiences in all seven areas of learning and reflect the learning experiences required. These plans then inform our short term weekly planning, which is based on observations, children's interests and topical issues. Our curriculum is flexible to allow us to meet the needs of each cohort and follow the children's interests, where appropriate, to inform our continuous provision.

Outdoor provision is informed by the medium term plans, children's interests and from observations made throughout the week. We observe how the children are accessing the provision, then enhance or adapt as appropriate.

When accessing outdoor provision, children have opportunities to learn on a larger scale where they are freer to move about and explore. The environment supports the development of gross motor skills through carefully planned experiences.

### Assessment

The Early Years Foundation Stage requires practitioners to track children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals (ELG) at the end of the reception year. During the first term in reception, we assess the ability and skills of each child using the Government's Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) as well as observing the children in play to ensure we build a holistic picture of each child.

Assessment in the foundation stage takes the form of observations, photographic evidence, and planned activities. We use a floor book to record our learning and exercise books for children's writing. All observations and assessments are used to inform future planning. Assessment involves all staff within the classroom.

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

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

The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers as well as the year 1 teacher. The profile data is submitted to the local authority.

## **Partnership with Families**

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families and carers.

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the role that they have played, and will continue to play, in educating their children.

Here are the ways we develop our relationships with parents and offer them our support:

- We talk to parents about their child before their child starts;
- We offer children an opportunity to spend time in the classroom with their teacher before starting school at 'Stay and Play' sessions;
- We invite parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- We provide an 'open door' policy encouraging parents to discuss anything important at the beginning and/or end of the day;
- We invite parents to phonics and reading, and maths information evenings in the autumn term;
- We provide parents with a 'Parent Planner' containing information about the term's skills and learning;
- We have meetings with parents to discuss individual children's progress in the autumn and spring terms;
- We provide parents with a written update on their child's attainment and next steps during the autumn and spring terms;
- We provide parents with an annual written report detailing their child's progress;
- Parents are invited to join us for academic trips;
- We invite parents into the classroom for 'Come and ...' sessions, where we read, craft and explore together;
- Parents are invited once each term to join their children at 'Parents to Lunch'.

## **Transitions**

At any transition, we acknowledge the children's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the children and other settings, including nurseries, childminders and, if necessary, the Early Years Inclusion Advisers.

Children attend introductory sessions to develop familiarity with the setting and staff in the summer term before starting school. We contact all childcare settings that the children have attended before joining our school and provide every child with a small transition booklet containing photos of the reception staff and classroom to look at throughout the summer holidays. One-to-one transition meetings are held with families in the first few days of the autumn term before the children begin their school journey at St. Andrew's Primary School.

In the final term of reception, the year 1 and reception staff meet to discuss each child's development against the early learning goals in order to support a smooth transition to year 1. This discussion enables the year 1 teachers to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all pupils.

## **Inclusion**

We value all our children as individuals. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of individual children, follows their interests and supports them at their own pace, so that they can make effective progress towards the early learning goals. Early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need; as a result, we work closely with parents and outside agencies.

## **Safety**

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum that teaches children how to keep themselves safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Early Years Foundation Stage Policy will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Early Years Foundation Stage Co-ordinator and Governors.

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