

ST ANDREW'S METHODIST PRIMARY SCHOOL



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Reviewed January 2026

Headteacher

Date:

Chair Of Governing Board

Date:

Date of Next Review January 2028

This policy has been scrutinized to ensure it meets the requirements of the single equality duties. The school will make every reasonable adjustment to comply with the duties and actively avoid discrimination.

Philosophy

Our school's Christian vision, '**Striving for excellence, together as one with God**' recognises that children need to be nurtured and supported both academically and spiritually if they are to

develop and succeed. We aim to create an environment where all pupils, whatever their background or needs, can flourish because all children are treated with dignity and respect. As the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the starting point for our children, we aim to ensure that those who may be vulnerable, face barriers to learning or have additional needs, are identified and individually supported. This Christian vision and its associated values help ensure the protection of all members of the school community.

Aims

In the EYFS we aim to provide a stimulating, enjoyable but challenging environment that gives children the best possible start to their school life. We welcome all children into our St Andrew's family and value our partnerships with families and carers. We work closely with our families to give children the best possible start in life and ensure they become life-long active learners. Our policy reflects our belief that every child has a right to grow up safe and healthy. We want them to enjoy learning, achieve success, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing.

We encourage children to develop independence within a secure, friendly atmosphere and support them in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing. We help each child recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success. We promote the development of their resilience and confidence by working towards personal goals. Our high expectations enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. From each child's individual starting points, children can develop through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences. These provide opportunities to consolidate, explore and test skills, knowledge and understanding. We want our children to be healthy and safe and achieve the knowledge and skills they need to move into Key Stage 1 (KS1).

Our EYFS curriculum is bespoke to our school and to the needs of our children. This curriculum is underpinned by developmental goals outlined in the EYFS progression document, which is available on the school website. We take great pride in ensuring that our curriculum is regularly evaluated to ensure it meets the needs of each cohort of children. Our curriculum is based on four important principles.

EYFS Principles

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

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, 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 rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families. We value our relationships with children and their extended families and provide lots of opportunities to work together holistically.

Enabling environments

We recognise that the environment plays a pivotal role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation, we assess the children's interests and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning. Teachers and teaching assistants meet weekly to ensure that the environment and the activities in their classrooms are meaningful and extend children's learning. We also value the importance of outdoor play and children access outdoor learning daily.

Learning and development

Our EYFS has two large classrooms (Nursery and Reception) and a large shared outdoor area. All our learning environments are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and reflect. We value learning through play and understand that all areas of learning are inter-connected. We aim to provide a fun and engaging learning environment with experienced teachers and teaching assistants who scaffold children's individual learning needs.

The EYFS Curriculum and Planning

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to support the children to work towards the final Early Learning Goals (ELGs). All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

Three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive, both in the EYFS and into KS1;

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

Children are supported through four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

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

Areas of learning are taught through a play-based approach with a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. Long, medium and short-term plans ensure each child has opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in each area of learning at the appropriate developmental level. Long term planning ensures curriculum coverage so all children can work towards and achieve the ELGs. These define the expectations for most children to reach by the

end of the EYFS. A half-termly topic-based approach allows flexibility in taking children's needs and interests into account.

Children are taught about Christian values, Methodism and develop an understanding of a variety of world faiths. This includes exploring festivals from different cultures such as Diwali and Chinese New Year.

Teaching and Learning

A variety of teaching and learning styles are used. These include whole class teaching, working with small groups or individuals and on-going assessment.

We have large EYFS classrooms and a team of experienced and highly trained staff. Nursery children are allocated a key worker, but work with all staff within their class. The children access the hall for PE, lunchtime and collective worship (when appropriate).

We consider good practice in the EYFS to include:

- A positive partnership between home and school. This means children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- A clear understanding of how children develop and learn and how this links to planning. We start from the child's needs and plan learning linked to assessments and observations.
- First-hand experiences, facilitated by skilled adult interventions to extend and develop play and communication. Children benefit from active learning both indoors and outdoors.
- A sequential, carefully planned curriculum. This helps children progress towards achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception class.
- Weekly planning meetings ensure continuous and enhanced provision (indoors and outdoors) creatively develops key skills and knowledge.
- Provision that builds on children's interests and develops intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- Encouraging children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-confidence.
- Support for children with Special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) with appropriate space, resources and equipment.
- Transition programmes with other schools and settings.
- An annual action plan for improvement in the EYFS, which is kept under review.
- A detailed EYFS progression document, underpinned by 'Development Matters' guidance.
- Regular identification of training needs of adults working in the EYFS to ensure the best provision for our children, based on current research and exemplary practice
- A high standard of outdoor provision, which enables children to learn about their environment and participate in activities to promote all areas of development.

Play in the Early Years Curriculum

Play underpins the delivery of our EYFS curriculum. Through play, our children explore and make sense of the world in a safe, supported environment. They initiate learning, learn self-control and understand the need for rules. As a result, children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. Play also allows children to take risks and make mistakes.

Learning creatively alongside others, they learn the need to communicate as they investigate and solve problems. Children express emotions in safe situations through group and individual play.

To ensure quality play takes place, we offer extended periods of continuous provision. This provides the secure environment needed to foster children's confidence and development. During extended periods of play children take their learning and interaction to a new level. As staff observe, they consider how to further develop learning. Staff in the EYFS fully engage, extend and promote high-quality interactions with children promoting vocabulary-rich interactions.

Assessment

Children's knowledge, understanding and skills are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in 'Development Matters' which underpins our progression document. Children's progress towards the EYFS assessment statements is uploaded onto the 'I Track' tracking system at the end of each term. This helps to inform future planning and interventions.

As part of our daily practice, teachers and teaching assistants observe and assess children's development and learning. We record observations in a variety of ways. Information is gathered from observing play, adult-led activities, discussions with parents/carers and talking to children. Written and photographic evidence helps build up a picture of a child's achievements and plan next steps in learning. Observations and samples of children's work are recorded in their 'Learning Journey'. We also share observations and photographs through 'Seesaw' where parents have the opportunity to respond.

Nursery Baseline

Children are assessed against all areas of the EYFS within the first 4 weeks of starting nursery. This records their starting points. Staff assess the children again at the end of each term. Any pupil who is not currently working at the expected level accesses additional interventions to support their progress and development.

Wellcomm Assessment

Children who attend our Nursery and Reception are assessed using the Wellcomm communication tool kit. Children are assessed each term and assessments are used to determine if children need extra support. The assessments using the Wellcomm toolkit also supports teachers and teaching assistants in their next steps for children.

Reception Baseline

Children are assessed on entry to Reception using the statutory baseline test (RBA) and teacher judgements based on observations of learning and play. This provides a starting point to measure the progress pupils make between Reception and the end of Year 6.

At the end of Reception year, the EYFS profile provides a summary of a child's development and learning, including whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the ELGs using a range of evidence, and staff knowledge of the child.

The statutory profile data is submitted to the local authority and used to support school improvement. Parents/carers are given information of their child's achievements at autumn and spring parent consultations and in a written report at the end of the summer term.

Inclusion in the EYFS (please refer to school inclusion policy)

At St Andrews, our Christian vision embraces inclusion. We recognise the abilities and strengths of all our children and the knowledge and experience they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life-experiences when planning for their learning.

We meet individual needs of pupils by recognising and addressing barriers to learning, including pupils with SEND. Staff plan carefully to include all children including those who are more able, socially disadvantaged, from different ethnic groups and children who speak English as an additional language (EAL). We do this by:

- Learning that builds on and extends children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develops self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs (e.g. speech and language programs, such as, WellComm).
- Learning opportunities that motivate and support children enabling them to learn effectively
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment where all children are valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This may involve referral to outside agencies such as speech therapy or additional classroom support for some of our children.

Early Years Pupil Premium

Pupils premium funding is used to benefit pupils considered to be 'disadvantaged.'

The annual pupil premium report (available on the website) outlines the impact of this spending.

Intimate Care *Also refer to 'Intimate care policy'

This is care that involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children can carry out themselves. Dependent on the age and stage of a child's development, they may need support dressing, wiping after using the toilet and changing clothes following a toileting accident.

Parents inform staff if their child is likely to require such care and a discussion takes place regarding how their needs can be met as closely in school as they would be met at home. Parents are asked to provide spare clothing and are informed when a child has needed such care. If necessary, the child will be provided with a spare item of school clothing, which will then be washed and returned to school by the parent.

Every child has the right to privacy and dignity when meeting their intimate care needs. It is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. Where possible, staff should change a child within sight of another member of staff. Intimate care is given in line with our school policy. **Parents are always informed when this care is given.**

Parents asked to sign 'Intimate Care Consent form' when they enrol at St. Andrews, this can be found in the 'Contact and Consent Pack'. If parents do not wish to agree to such care being carried out, they will be asked to come into school and administer the care themselves.

Health & safety and safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, their individual needs are met, and 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 (2025), 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025' and the school's safeguarding policy.

We are a healthy school and children under 5 receive free milk. They have daily access to fresh water and fruit. Children in Nursery bring water bottles and Reception children have access to a water fountain. Children may choose a school lunch or can bring a healthy packed lunch.

Transition *Also refer to 'Transition policy'

We recognise that starting school and moving classes can be a difficult time for children and parents. We have a strong procedure for transitions to ensure that our children and parents are confident and happy when moving to a new year group. This includes

New to Nursery

- Staff visit a child's current EYFS provision. They meet the child and find out key information from their carers at the setting. This builds a picture of each child's individual needs and interests.
- A meeting for new Nursery children in the summer term to give parents key information, outline school expectations, a curriculum overview and advice on preparing their child.
- A home visit or phone call prior to their child starting school. Children benefit from meeting staff in a familiar environment and parents can ask questions and share knowledge or concerns they have about their child.
- Stay and play sessions before the children start school, which they attend with parents. This familiarizes them with the school environment and their teachers.
- A reduced timetable at the beginning of the school year for four weeks. This gives staff time to welcome them, build relationships and support them in exploring their new environment.

Transition to Reception Class

- All Reception starters spend a morning in their new classroom, with their new teacher, at a 'moving up morning' in July.
- Parents of Reception starters attend a transition meeting in July.
- We have a 'settling in period' for Reception pupils where they attend half days for **one week**. This enables children to become familiar with new routines and for children new to the school to settle into the environment and build relationships.

Transition from EYFS to KS1

- Reception children spend time in the Y1 class on 'moving up morning' in July.
- Parents/carers are invited to a 'meet the teacher' meeting in the first weeks of starting Year One.

- Transition meeting in June/July when staff share their knowledge of each child's progress and attainment, individual need and assessment data, with their next class teacher. This ensures staff have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to the new school year.

A range of shared activities are planned to develop children's confidence and ensure continuity in throughout the EYFS. They access areas including, the hall, library, rainbow room, school playgrounds and playing fields. This means they are confident and well prepared for moving around the school and for mixing with older children. In Nursery, they are gradually introduced to whole school activities such as celebration assemblies.

The role of parents

We believe parent/carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. Parents are made to feel welcome and valued in their dealings with all members of staff. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through;

- Nursery parent and child play sessions
- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school
- Key worker visits to children in their Nursery setting prior to their starting school
- Induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- Nursery home visits, where staff visit children at home before they start school
- Parent/teacher consultations in autumn and spring to discuss a child's progress. Parents receive a detailed report on their child's progress and attainment in summer.
- Curriculum workshops for parents and their children are held throughout the year. These are based on a particular area of learning and help parents support learning at home.
- Sharing information on supporting children at home via Seesaw app.
- Uploading regular knowledge organisers showing what learning will be covered. Parents are encouraged to use Seesaw to upload any key learning from home.
- Flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure.
- Access to the class website and school twitter pages which share learning experiences.

Monitoring of the EYFS Provision

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. The SLT, including the EYFS Leader and class teachers, are responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and progress. Areas for development are identified and included in the school improvement plan.

All adults in Nursery and Reception have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of the performance management cycle.