

St John the Baptist Church of England (VA) Primary School



Loving learning, Building
Community, Growing in faith

EYFS Policy 2025-26

Review

This policy was reviewed by the Resource Committee of the Governing Body in September 2025 and will be reviewed in September 2026.

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Signed: Gill Carr, Chair of Governors

1 Intent

At St John's we have a clear intent which is embedded across the EYFS. Our aim is to support our children to become happy and confident individuals who make positive contributions to society. We deliver a sequential, inclusive and ambitious curriculum which challenges all children. Our aim is to build strong foundations across all subject areas, so that children are ready and able to flourish when they enter Key Stage One. Our curriculum is broad and balanced and reflects the children's backgrounds and the diversity of the city we live in. We endeavour to make our curriculum authentic and relevant to our children by providing opportunities and experiences to build a cultural capital and follow the interests of the children. We place importance on a high-quality provision that encourages children to be curious and independent, to build resilience and take risks. We value building strong relationships with parents and carers and understand that parents, teachers and the environment are the most important factors in child development.

2 Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage September 2025.

3 Our approach

In our EYFS we deliver short carpet inputs followed by high quality adult and child led group work. The children also have opportunities for extended high quality play as well as free flow access to the outdoor area. Learning is tailored to the individual needs of all children and all staff take an active role ensuring that every child thrives and reaches their full potential. We follow the curiosity approach where children are provided with authentic and natural objects to enhance their play. Children are encouraged to be independent in all areas of the classroom and take ownership of their own learning. We provide open ended activities where children can ask questions, make links, find new ways to do things, build resilience and take pride in their achievements.

Learning is brought to life through visitors, experiences and trips such as having ducklings in the classroom, storytelling events, visits from people in the community, trips out and visits to local places of worship.

The outdoor area is a vital learning space for our children where they can explore the natural world, develop their gross motor skills and ignite their curiosity and understanding of scientific and mathematical concepts. Children are encouraged to use the outdoor area throughout the year.

3.1 Equality and Inclusion

At St Johns we ensure that all children are offered equal opportunities regardless of their ethnicity, background, gender or any additional needs that they may have. We celebrate the wide range of cultures and families that join us at St Johns, and acceptance and inclusion are woven throughout our curriculum. We offer the children a wide range of experiences both in school, and through visits. Provision is made so that all children can access these experiences and benefit from them at their own level. We are ambitious and have high expectations for all children. Children with additional needs, including those that are academically more able, are planned for individually to make sure that their learning is tailored to their needs and to ensure that all children make progress regardless of their starting points.

4 Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2025.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for 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 prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

The EYFS also outlines three characteristics of effective learning;

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

These state the key learning behaviours needed to succeed in EYFS and are reported to parents at the end of the academic year.

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively.

Staff also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and inspiring experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through carefully planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. There is a strong focus on oracy and developing the children's vocabulary. Key vocabulary for each area of learning is planned to ensure that the language children use during play develops throughout the year.

Intentional vocabulary is also shared with parents each week to help the children consolidate their learning at home.

There is also a strong focus on transcription, and children are given several opportunities to develop their fine motor skills and letter formation throughout the day. Reading and writing are taught through phonics, and the children learn to write dictated sentences as well as oral composition.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

5 Links with St. John's Church

At St. John's we have a strong link with St. John the Baptist Church. We visit the church several times across the year to celebrate key events in the Christian calendar such as Christmas and Easter. Our aim is to provide the children with the tools to develop their own belief and spirituality during their time at St Johns and beyond. We provide all children with the opportunity to develop their relationship with God both collectively and as individuals, so that they can take this with them throughout their journey at St Johns and later in life. Each classroom has its own reflection area that children can access independently. This is where they can have a quiet space for prayer, explore religious texts and artefacts and time to reflect on their own developing spirituality. We also hold daily collective worship and prayer. Children are also encouraged to celebrate and value faiths and cultures outside of their own.

6 Assessment

At St. John's, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the 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 value 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:

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

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

7 Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Before children join us at St. John's, we conduct nursery and home visits where we can get to know the families and see the children in their own setting. We also hold a new parent meeting and transition day where we provide transition booklets and information.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. We record children's learning using the online platform 'Tapestry'. This allows both staff and parents to share their children's achievements and next steps across the seventeen areas of learning and the characteristics of effective learning. This helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

We also have parent's evenings in the autumn and spring terms followed by a formal end of year report in the summer term. We operate an open-door policy where regular informal conversations about the children are welcomed and encouraged. This ensures a smooth transition and a consistent approach between home and school.

8 Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We know 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 take all necessary steps to keep our children safe and well, promoting good health, manage behaviour, and maintain records, policies and procedures.

In EYFS we have our own risk assessment which is clear and implemented by all members of staff. For more information, please see our safeguarding policy.

9 Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy