



*Live Life, Love Learning, Guided by God*



# St Mary's C of E Primary School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### 1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

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

### 2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

### 3. Structure of the EYFS

Our EYFS provision at St Mary's CofE Primary School consists of one reception class. Children enter the reception class in September of the school year in which they are five in accordance with RBK Local Authority and the school's admissions policies. Please see the school's [admission policy](#) for further details.

At St Mary's we operate a system of Home Visits on entry to the school. Each family will be offered a Home Visit for their child before starting school. When children start in reception class they will attend for the morning only to begin with, followed by a morning session and lunchtime, before staying for the full day. This is to enable staff to introduce the routines of the school day gradually and has been found to be a very effective way of supporting the children to become secure with the routines and expectations of full time school in a positive & manageable way.

The EYFS team works **(work)** closely with colleagues in KS1 to enable the children to move from reception class to year 1 with the skills and confidence that they need to continue their learning.

## 4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 EYFS statutory framework.

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

EYFS is about how children learn, as well as what they learn. Children need opportunities to develop their own play and independent exploration. This is enjoyable and motivating. They also need adults to ‘scaffold’ their learning by giving them just enough help to achieve something they could not do independently. Helping children to think, discuss and plan ahead is important, like gathering the materials they need to make a den before they start building. These are ways of helping children to develop the characteristics of effective learning.

### Characteristics of effective learning in practice at St Mary’s

<p><b>Play and Exploration</b> Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development</p>	<p>The importance of play is reflected in our setting by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Providing materials, situations and experiences that will stimulate children’s play both indoor and out.</li> <li>✓ Creating an atmosphere in which each child is able to proceed at his/her own pace.</li> <li>✓ Planning for different types of play.</li> <li>✓ Using observation to enable the adult to support, extend and consolidate a child’s thinking.</li> <li>✓ Actively promoting the value of play amongst parents, children and staff</li> </ul>
<p><b>Active Learning Children</b> learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.</p>	<p>Children learn and develop in many different ways. Our setting aims to reflect every child’s learning journey by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ providing an environment to stimulate active learning</li> <li>✓ planning opportunities to celebrate and reflect each child’s unique learning journey</li> <li>✓ time given for children to follow a particular line of enquiry within the classroom environment</li> <li>✓ provide an opportunity for children to share home experiences and interests and develop confidence in speaking in a whole class situation</li> </ul>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Creativity and Critical Thinking</b></p> <p>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.</p>	<p>We aim to enable children to think creatively by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ providing open ended activities for the children</li> <li>✓ allow children to explore resources before expecting them to use them in their adult led learning</li> <li>✓ ensuring a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities</li> <li>✓ using role-play as a creative tool to provide themes for learning</li> <li>✓ deliver teaching and learning creatively across the whole curriculum, not just in the arts</li> <li>✓ allowing children time to develop sustained shared thinking skills independently with adult guidance and support where needed to lead the process</li> </ul>
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#### 4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable 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 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.

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 in Key Stage 1.

As a Church School, we follow the curriculum guidance for Religious Education developed by the Diocese of Guildford. This states that RE in the Early Years in a Church school should help pupils to understand that their school has a special relationship with their parish church (both building, and community) and what this means. It also recognises that in accordance with good early years practice, the RE should be relevant to the beliefs, cultures and interests of the children in the class. This may mean that religions other than Christianity are included.

At St Mary’s C of E Primary School we promote a love of reading throughout the school and aspire for our children to grow to become voracious readers and keen storytellers. To achieve this we use the lively synthetic phonics programme ‘Read, Write, Inc. Phonics’ to ensure we get our children reading and writing quickly.

At St Mary’s C of E Primary School, we believe that Maths (fluency, problem solving and reasoning skills) are key to children’s education. We follow the White Rose

sequence of learning for our Maths curriculum and we aim for all children to engage with, and enjoy, the Maths curriculum.

Our reception class children also have the opportunity to learn Spanish through weekly lessons with a specialist Spanish teacher as well as regular PE lessons with our specialist PE coach.

Further information about our curriculum offer can be found [here](#).

## 5. Assessment

At St Mary's CofE Primary School, 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 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:

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

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, making reference to [Development Matters](#) guidance, and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

## 6. Working with families

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. We encourage families to let us know about any achievements the children have made at home. "What a star" certificates are sent home for families to document these milestones. These are then celebrated in school with the children, creating a sense of pride in their accomplishments.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. Regular parent-teacher meetings and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Throughout the year, we also run information workshops for families. This may be in the format of a presentation or might be a class session run by the teacher for families to observe.

Each child is assigned a key person (usually the class teacher) 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.

## 7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years. Children are provided with a healthy snack consisting of milk or water and a piece of fruit or vegetable each day. The importance of washing hands regularly, especially before eating is discussed as part of the class routines. Children have twice weekly PE sessions, delivered by a specialist coach as well as daily access to the outdoor learning area and learn about keeping themselves physically and mentally healthy through weekly PSHE sessions. Further information about our PSHE curriculum can be found on the [school website](#).

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

## 8. Transition

### 8.1 Transition into Reception

The transition from home, pre-school or nursery to school is an important step for both children and parents. We hope to ease the process in the following ways:

- An opportunity for children to visit their new class during school time with their parents.
- Visit by the child's teacher and Teaching Assistant prior to starting. Visiting child in setting and home
- A 'Welcome pack and 'Learning Journey' page to be completed before entry into school by the parents/carers and the child in order to find out more about the child's interest and assess individual needs.
- A staggered entry in the first week enabling each child to settle in gradually.
- Staff liaison with the local playgroups, pre-schools and nurseries in order to develop continuity and enhance our knowledge of the children and assess their needs.

### Induction

We believe that children need to be introduced gently into school life.

- The staff work hard to establish clear routines in order to help the children feel secure.
- Lunchtime arrangements take into account the needs of the youngest children who may feel nervous at first. Support by a member of the Early Years team at lunchtime as well as a separate play area help meet these needs.
- Children are introduced to whole school activities such as Collective Worship gradually throughout the reception year.

### Transition from Reception to Year 1

The themes, principles and commitments of the Early Years Foundation Stage are continued into Year 1.

- During the Summer term Year 1 staff visit the Reception classes. Story swaps, as an example, allow the children and the staff to begin to get to know one another.
- The Year 1 staff team are supported by the Early Years team in planning for the children's needs and continuing to add to the individual profile assessments throughout the Autumn term for children not meeting the GLD.
- During the Autumn term the children continue to access the Early Learning Goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage through a balance of child initiated and adult led approach to teaching and learning.
- The classroom environment and teaching styles reflect a gradual change towards a more adult led approach. The rate of change is led by the needs of each group of children and is kept constantly

under review, allowing time and space for the children’s individual development to continue at their own pace.

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the EYFS leader every three years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.

Committee responsible	Pupil Progress
Approval required by	FGB
Statutory or Recommended	Recommended
Frequency of review	2 years
Date approved	February 2023
<b>Date of next review</b>	<b>January 2025</b>
Display on website	Yes
Link with other policies	Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Health & Safety Policy First Aid & Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy Safe Drop Off & Collection Policy Behaviour Policy Admissions Policy Complaints Policy