



St Jude & St Paul's  
Church of England Primary School

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date: November 2023

Committee: Full Governing Body

Lead: EYFS Lead

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## Our School Vision

***'Shine, Encourage, Love and Learn'***

Jesus said, "You are the light of the world...let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." (MATTHEW 5: 14-16)

We aspire to **shine** as lights in the world as we journey together. We ask for God's **blessing** to:

- **Encourage**, through valuing and celebrating diversity;
- **Love**, so that we may flourish as one, nurturing the unique contributions of all, impacting positively on our world;
- **Learn**, so that we develop a love of learning, aiming for excellence in all we do.

Our core values: Forgiveness, Love, Encouragement, Wisdom and Togetherness

St Jude and St Paul's is a place where everyone is treated equally, encouraged and respected. We believe that all children should be able to achieve their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is nurtured and encouraged in a happy, caring and creative environment. We all strive to establish a happy place where high expectation for behaviour, progress and achievement are set.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. The EYFS is based upon four principles;

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and development

The Foundation Stage comprises of one Reception Class that has up to 30 children. There is a full-time class teacher, nursery nurse and teaching assistant.

At times, the Foundation Stage will have visiting student teachers and other students working in the setting alongside the staff. Other professionals may also work within the setting throughout the year. All those visiting the site and having contact with children have the appropriate DBS checks.

The Foundation Stage staff work as part of a team. Planning is shared to provide consistency and progression, providing age and stage related activities to suit all our children. Children are taught in a

variety of ways; in whole class groups, small group work, pairs and individually. We are dedicated to providing excellent pastoral care and education to children in our care.

Staff are qualified and have a wide range of experience and expertise in working with and educating children. The staff are committed to professional development and attend up to date training courses. They have excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Child Development.

The Foundation Stage team plan a smooth transition from home/nursery to school and offers stability for the younger children. In the Reception class, children are provided with an environment in which they are given opportunities to express themselves using a variety of resources and suitable activities to stimulate and extend imagination and understanding. Through planned play and talking, young children learn about themselves and the world around them, they are given opportunities to socialise, make friends and therefore develop personal, social and emotional skills and develop confidence.

In the Foundation Stage, we acknowledge the potential for learning in every activity and situation that arises. Our aim is to provide a secure and stimulating environment in which children flourish and learn to make sense of the real world. We ensure the children feel valued and give them the confidence to become active learners. Planned activities provide first hand experiences through play and discussion; children are encouraged to interact with others and to move about and explore a wide variety of learning situations. There are seven planned areas of provision with a wide range of activities, resources and materials available. Opportunities are offered for sustained activity and continuous provision, as well as spontaneous, self-chosen activities. It is important that children experience success, have fun and enjoy themselves whilst learning.

### **EYFS AREAS OF LEARNING**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a curriculum from birth to five years old. We follow the strands set by this curriculum and focus the learning opportunities on the seven areas of learning (3 Prime and 4 Specific) which are;

#### Prime Areas

1. Communication and language
2. Personal, Social and Emotional
3. Physical

#### Specific Areas

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. Through play and practical experiences, children learn about the world and their place in it. They learn through first hand experiences, talk, books and equipment. We set realistic yet challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys, girls, special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, and children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

## **Communication and Language**

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

## **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

## **Physical Development**

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

## **Literacy**

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. At St Jude and St Paul's we use The Essential Letters and Sounds programme to teach Phonics. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

## **Mathematics**

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

### **Understanding the World**

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

### **Expressive Arts and Design**

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe

### **OUTSIDE**

We have a small and carefully planned outside learning space which children have access to each day. The outside area is an extension of the classroom and there is a variety of resources to facilitate learning. In this area, EYFS staff provide planned activities for children as well as giving opportunities for them to make their own choices.

### **PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEOS**

At the beginning of the year parents/carers are asked to give permission for their child to be photographed/videoed during their time at school. We use these images in the classroom, on displays, in the children's individual profiles and occasionally on the school's website (children are not named). Tapestry is used by the Reception staff as part of formative assessment and also to communicate with parents/carers. Parents have the opportunity to add comments on observations made. The Reception staff may also write suggestions of ways parents can support their children at home.

### **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns, which the school has will be noted and if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant agency. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available on the school website.

## **PARENTS/CARERS AS PARTNERS**

We value the involvement of parents in school. Parental involvement with school begins even before children start Reception with an invitation to visit the school, attend a meeting and receive a home visit in July.

Parent consultation meetings are held in the autumn and spring term and parents are invited to discuss their child's progress. A report is sent out at the end of the summer term and parents are invited in to school to discuss this report if they wish. It is important to stress that if parents are concerned in any way about their child, they should speak to the class teacher, Foundation Stage leader or Head Teacher. Parents/cares are invited to various assemblies and functions throughout the year.

## **Staff Supervision**

Reception staff are invited to a weekly meeting with the Assistant Head, this meeting offers staff the opportunity to discuss the needs of the children and also to offer supervision, this provides professional one to one support away from the children and direct work environment. To reflect on own practice, professional progress, safeguarding issues and to self-evaluate. It also supports increased staff retention which ensures continuity of care for children.

## **EQUALITIES and DISABILITIES**

All pupils in this school are entitled to a broad and balanced and relevant curriculum regardless of ability, gender, race and social circumstances. Both more able children and those with special educational needs are considered and the curriculum is adapted to suit all levels of ability.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

Care is taken to assess the needs of the needs of each child. Should a child have a and special need the parent will be informed at an early stage. Group and individual support is provided within the school where possible. We have links with various agencies and when necessary their involvement may be required to support certain children. Parents/carers will always be consulted if an outside agency is required to support their children. Our Special Educational Needs Policy is available for parents on the school website.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

We have a Health and Safety Policy which all staff and students are familiar with and we have designated staff responsible for first aid in school. We also have staff who have received paediatric first aid training. Children are taught the safe and appropriate use of equipment and materials. Children are taught to be mindful when moving around the school and are aware of safety issues. Risk assessments are undertaken before after school activities take place and before school trips.

## **ALLERGIES**

Parents/Carers are asked to inform the school of any foods their children are allergic to or any foods they do not wish their child to eat. Photographs of children alongside information related to allergies and dietary needs are placed in the kitchen area and classrooms for staff awareness.

## **MEDICAL NEEDS**

The school has a Medical Policy in place. Every class, Kitchen and General Office has a medical book which contains photographs and individual child's care plans. We also have 'Think of me' posters which detail children's medical needs.

All current staff have received Epi-pen, asthma and epilepsy training.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes place through a continuous cycle of observation, interaction with the children and adult assessment against the Early Learning Goals.

Teachers ensure:

- The Department for Education Statutory Baseline assessment is carried out in the first 6 weeks of a child starting school (This is an online assessment and no results are sent to schools by the DFE)
- Each child is observed regularly, with learning recorded through photos, commentary and pieces of children's learning. Areas of learning and development are recorded on each observation/piece of learning. Tapestry is used to record observations and parents have access to this platform and are able to add their own comments.
- At the end of each (half) term, formative assessments collected during the term are used to make a summative judgment of the child's attainment against each area of learning and development.
- A child's attainment against each of the Early Learning Goals (ELG) is recorded in our tracking tool. Progress is tracked throughout the year.
- At the end of Reception Year parents receive a report and their child's progress towards the Early Learning Goals (Expected/Emerging)
- Assessments are also made of children's phonic awareness and recognition of high frequency words, in order to place them in the appropriate groups for phonics and reading and ensure that they are Year 1 ready.

### **Transition from Nursery to School**

We ensure that the transition from nursery/home is carefully planned by implementing the following:

- Early years Foundation Stage presentation in summer term for parents
- Reception teacher visits nurseries in the summer term
- Nurseries are invited into the school. Key worker brings children for visits
- Parent meetings are offered at the beginning of the autumn term
- Staggered intake in September
- Tailored programmes to support specific pupil's needs

### **MONITORING and REVIEW**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system. The Local Authority (Islington) moderates the work of the EYFS on a 4-year cycle. Reception staff attend a termly cluster group to quality assure assessments.

### **Links to policies**

Intimate Care Policy

Child protection and Safeguarding Policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Accessibility Policy