



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Owner	Claire Harvey	Approved by	Executive



1. History of Policy Changes

Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change

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3. Introduction

"All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- Quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
- A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported."

Early years foundation stage statutory framework page 7 – DfE effective 1st September 2025

4. Definitions

- 'Manager' in this policy, is anyone as identified in the staffing structure with line management responsibilities.

- EYFS – Early Years Foundation Stage
- ELG – Early Learning Goals

5. Aims

At Bishop Aldhelm's CE Primary School, we wish to promote the love of learning and aim to provide the highest quality care and education, where children feel secure, welcome, and valued within our happy and caring school. We deliver an Early Years curriculum that educates the whole child so that they are lifelong learners. Our purpose is to ensure that every child gets the best possible start in life and receives the appropriate support to fulfil their full potential and maximise their life chances. No child should feel excluded or disadvantaged. We achieve this by ensuring our Early Years provision is a place where children's uniqueness is valued. Children feel safe, supported and nurtured, and where partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals are active and highly valued.

We believe that:

- Children need security, love, friendship, encouragement, motivation, stimulation, praise, and consideration for their individuality.
- The whole child is important – social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and moral developments are interrelated and valued.
- In the Early Years, children learn best through first-hand experience and need a stimulating environment to help develop lively, imaginative, enquiring minds.
- Children learn naturally through play. It is a process through which children explore, investigate, recreate, and come to understand their world.
- Our provision promotes high standards and expectations, learning and skills, positive attitudes, and enjoyment through an exciting and irresistible curriculum that is steeped in joyful experiences.
- Children should be allowed to develop knowledge, confidence, self-esteem, independence, self-discipline, individuality, responsibility, perseverance, co-operation, and social awareness to achieve their potential.
- Children benefit from positive partnerships between home and school. Mutual respect and dialogue will ease the transition from home to school and support children's future learning.
- Effective Early Years are always ambitious to be better.

6. The Early Years Foundation Stage

Teaching in the EYFS at Bishop Aldhelm's CE Primary School follows the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (DFE, 2025) [EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers](#) and is supported by the non-statutory curriculum guidance set out in Development Matters (DFE, 2023) [Development Matters - GOV.UK](#) and Birth to 5 Matters (Early Education 2021) [Birthto5Matters-download.pdf](#). This is planned and delivered by committed practitioners who fully understand the curriculum requirements. Four guiding principles shape practice in early years and are reflected in Sam's entitlement detailed at the start of this policy and this is how they look at Bishop Aldhelm's CE Primary School

Unique Child + Positive Relationships + Enabling Environment = Learning & Development

Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured, which in school looks like:

- Recognition that the child comes first
- Support and challenge for all children
- Making personal choices in their learning journey
- Developing courage, love, inspiration and unity



Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. In school this is seen through:

- Informative meetings with parents, carers before school begins and throughout the year
- Parent contributions to a child's learning journey are valued
- Time Together events which includes parents evening and school reports
- Information evenings and parent partnerships to support home learning / understanding of Bishop Aldhelm's CE Primary School
- Open door policy
- Working with other professionals and experts beyond school
- Highly skilled staff trained in all aspects of the new EYFS framework, including the safeguarding requirements, ensuring that all adults know how to keep children safe and to recognise and report concerns.

Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. This is demonstrated with:

- A high-quality well planned learning environment both indoors and outside to stimulate, support and challenge children whilst keeping them safe
- Children are actively encouraged to explore the world around them developing their creativity, independence, thinking skills and ability to solve problems across the curriculum
- A rich variety of stimulating, high quality resources inside and out
- Resources used aim to stimulate, challenge and inspire children to engage in learning and provide for both the planned and unplanned curriculum
- Clear, accessible well organised learning areas that promote independence and exploration
- Exciting, enriching and educational opportunities within the EYFS settings
- Outdoor area with areas of the curriculum available each day, and an opportunity to play and run in a large space. This is further enhanced by our Heath School which ensures that all children experience the wonders of the outside world regardless of their background.
- Adults who are skilled at supporting, challenging and extending the learning and development of each child
- Areas to encourage and support independent skills, curious thinking and perseverance
- All areas are valued by adults and used for learning

The importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates.

We place a high value on structured and unstructured play. Throughout the day adults provide opportunities for learning in a variety of styles that are active, engaging and fun.

- Exciting learning topics, including current interests of the children
- Carefully planned activities
- Supportive adults who can meet the needs of each child
- Enriching resources available
- Hearing, valuing and responding to each child's voice
- Learning through the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning
- Exposing children to "cultural capital" to increase the chance of social mobility



7. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework and Curriculum

Our children follow a broad and balanced curriculum with the EYFS Framework underpinning all practice. The EYFS has seven areas of learning and development which are set out into Prime and Specific areas. The three Prime areas all closely link with one another and are central to all the other areas of learning and development. They represent the earliest stages of development and are critical for influencing later successes in life. It is essential for children to acquire these skills by the age of 5 as they become more difficult to acquire later and may hold a child back in other areas of development.

Prime Areas of Development

Communication and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening, attention and understanding • Speaking
Physical Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gross motor skills • Fine motor skills
Personal Social and Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation • Managing self • Building relationships

Specific Areas of Development

Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension • Word reading • Writing
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number • Numerical patterns
Understanding the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past and present • People, culture and communities • The natural world
Expressive Arts and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating with materials • Being imaginative and expressive

These areas of learning and development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others. All areas of learning and development are closely interlinked.

This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum which allows children to make links between what they are learning. As effective Early Years practitioners, we plan a broad and balanced range of activities based on the needs of the children in our setting. We plan a yearly progression of knowledge and skills which provides opportunities for children to retrieve and recall previously taught knowledge and skills. We deliver these skills through a coherent and sequentially designed curriculum based on the children's needs and interests. Whilst we know children learn best when they are following their interests, we also know that it is our responsibility to expose them to ideas and concepts beyond their comfort zone. We therefore plan learning opportunities that broaden and enrich the children's beliefs and experiences. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child-initiated activities both indoors and outdoors. Educational trips and visits from members of our community are also planned to support children's learning within the classroom. 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage' guidance material is used to support our planning and assessments of children's next steps. When planning and facilitating these activities we reflect on the different ways they learn and support children in using the three Characteristics of

Effective Teaching and Learning. These demonstrate the learning skills a child needs to develop to become a successful learner.

Characteristics of Effective Learning Skills being developed

Playing and Exploring	Engagement: Finding out, having a go, being willing, connecting known ideas, pretending & taking a risk
Active Learning	Motivation: Concentration, focus, persistence, enjoyment, effort, attention to detail, satisfaction in reaching goals
Creating and thinking critically	Thinking: Problem solving, creating own ideas, planning, selecting resources equipment, adapting & reviewing

We also recognise the importance of executive function which contributes to a child's growing ability to self-regulate. Executive function includes the child's ability to:

- hold information in mind
- focus their attention
- think flexibly
- inhibit impulsive behaviour

These abilities contribute to the child's growing ability to self-regulate:

- concentrate their thinking
- plan what to do next
- monitor what they are doing and adapt
- regulate strong feelings
- be patient for what they want
- bounce back when things get difficult

Language development is central to self-regulation. Children use language to guide their actions and plans. Play gives many opportunities for children to focus their thinking, persist and plan.

8. Planning, Teaching, Learning and Play

At Bishop Aldhelm's CE Primary School, we recognise that young children learn best when they are active. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible, and our Foundation Stage has an ethos of learning through play.

"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals, and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play and learning that is guided by adults."

"As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for Key Stage 1."

Early years foundation stage statutory framework pg 16 & 17 – DfE effective 1st September 2025

Play is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. It is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child and occurs both inside and outside. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with time to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences. They support children to discover, explore, investigate and develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity. Play can also help them



to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. The types of play offered will be appropriate to the individual children's needs and include:

- play which is child led
- play which is sensitively supported and extended by adults
- play which is guided towards specific educational outcomes

Whilst we value learning through play and see the impact of purposeful intervention through this, we recognise that there are some knowledge and skills that need to be explicitly planned, taught and rehearsed. This will be delivered through a balance of groupings to include whole class, small collaborative groups, peer partner, individual, attainment and mixed attainment as appropriate.

For further details on our curriculum please refer to <https://www.bishopaldhelms.poole.sch.uk/>

9. Assessments and Record Keeping

Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of our EYFS. Regular, planned and focused assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs. There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development to inform their next steps. Assessment in Reception is carried out in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile: [Early years foundation stage profile handbook](#).

Baseline assessments are carried out during the first half of the Autumn Term / When a child starts – including Preschool. Evidence is gathered through practitioners' observations of children whilst engaged in their self-initiated activities, as well as planned opportunities. Transfer information from pre-schools and parent contributions also support practitioners in making on entry assessments. In addition to establishing our own school baseline assessment, staff will also administer the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) [2025 reception baseline assessment: assessment and reporting arrangements \(ARA\) - GOV.UK](#)

DCPro is used to track and monitor pupils' summative progress from their entry to school and is updated termly, judging whether pupils are 'on track' or 'off track' in their development of the three Prime Areas, Literacy and Mathematical Development. Gradings are

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| • on track | secure to meet ELG |
| • on track minus | should meet ELG, gentle guiding |
| • off track plus | could meet ELG with strong and targeted support |
| • off track minus | very unlikely to meet ELG |

The Early Years Leader and Head Teacher closely track all key groups through the year, including gender, FSM, PPG, EAL, SEND, and summer born pupils. Gaps in learning are identified and made a priority, by adapting planning and if appropriate setting up interventions. Pupils who are assessed as not secure to meet ELG are monitored closely. Pupil progress reviews are undertaken termly with the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher and the SENCO, and appropriate interventions and changes to provision are agreed to help close gaps in pupil development.

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 ('expected')
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The Profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents / carers. If a child has met "expected" for all 7 Prime ELGs and the 5 ELGs for Literacy and Mathematics, it is reported that they



have met the “Good Level of Development” for starting in Year 1. The results of the EYFS Profile are shared with parents / carers for their child with a brief report that illustrates each child’s strengths / next steps. EYFS Profile data is submitted to the Local Authority.

The EYFS Profile is moderated to ensure consistent assessment judgements. This is completed internally and in partnership with Trust Schools and other local schools. In addition, teachers moderate with Year 1 teachers to support a smooth transition into Year 1. Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the EYFS Profile, which supports the dialogue between Foundation and Year 1 teachers about each child’s stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Assessment in EYFS is observation based. Staff monitor children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child-initiated play. Children’s interests are ‘in the moment’ and need to be responded to there and then to gain the full value of the child’s curiosity, understanding and engagement at the time. At Bishop Aldhelm’s CE Primary School, we work towards this by ensuring there is sufficient time in the day for the adults to work alongside the children in their Adventure Time, when they are initiating their own learning. We believe the most important role of the adult is to interact with the children and respond to their emerging needs and interests. Staff capture ‘Wow moments’ where children have demonstrated a skill or knowledge that is significant to them and their learning journey. These moments may be captured in the form of an online observation. Learning Journals are used to collect observations. Children’s workbooks also provide evidence for assessment. We use these observations to support our developing knowledge of individual children. They inform us of children’s abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children’s learning priorities are identified, and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

Learning and assessments are captured in a variety of ways including:

- maths books
- writing books
- online learning journals
- phonics workbooks
- digital floor books
- ongoing assessments
- contextual information form completed on entry
- Phonics tracking system and levelled books
- Focused / group / assessment / planning

10. Special Educational Needs

All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments consider contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable practitioners to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage, and the schools Inclusion Leader(s) is consulted for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school’s policy for Special Educational Needs and Inclusion. See Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policies and also Intimate Care Policy.

11. Partnerships with Parents (this includes carers and important key adults in a child’s life)

At Bishop Aldhelm’s CE Primary School we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role in educating the children. We acknowledge that parents are



children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We feel it is important to listen to parents and value all they have to say regarding their child. All information is sought sensitively, parents reassured as to its confidentiality.

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 in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. In our Pre-School and Foundation classes this key adult is the class teacher.

Ways in which we support and promote home learning are

- Parent workshops to help understand expectations for their child and how they can support learning at home
- Parental feedback opportunities
- Celebration events in school such as parent partnerships and time together events
- Spring School Readiness and Welcome meetings
- gathering information on the child prior to starting school
- involvement in transition events
- attending curriculum workshops
- Ways parents can share home learning
- Weekly post-it, half-termly newsletters, messages sent through DC Pro and the school's My Child At School app, the school's website, the school's social media platforms, the year group email
- Open door policy which promotes face-to-face communication,

12. Attendance

Bishop Aldhelm's CE Primary School are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

The whole community- pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play.

13. Effective transition to Nursery / Reception / Year 1

We highly value the need for a child's transitional journey to be smooth, supported, gradual and individualised. Transition processes involve the family and start before children enter our Pre-school and/or feeder setting through to the transition into Foundation and then year 1. They include:

- new parent meetings sharing the uniqueness of child, this will include capturing any allergies and health information
- parent welcome meetings
- stay and Play sessions
- All About Me booklet
- staff visits to home /preschools / nurseries
- settings transfer documents
- involving health and other professionals if appropriate / beneficial



To Year 1

- Reception to Year 1 transition meetings
- discussion around judgments made in the EYFS Profile
- Year 1 teachers spending time in the EYFS to observe and engage with children in their known space
- children having time in the year 1 base prior to the summer holiday
- Keep In Touch Day during the Summer Holiday

We celebrate our strong links with feeder preschools and aim to engage in termly networks / cluster groups with local providers to support a cohesive transition and shared set of stories / rhymes / songs that children are exposed to prior to starting school to provide familiarity and reassurance in a new setting.

14. Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

We follow the Statutory Welfare Requirements [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK](#) that focus on Safeguarding & promoting children's welfare; Child protection, Suitable people, Staff qualifications, training, support and skills, Paediatric first aid, Key person, Staff: child ratios, Health including food and drink, Supporting and understanding behaviour, Special educational needs, Safety and suitability of premises, Environment and equipment, Information and record keeping. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety. All staff adhere to the school's Health and Safety Policy.

We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks such as having an understanding of carrying scissors appropriately, sun safety, beach safety, road and Clever Never Goes. We follow set procedures when children become ill or have an accident and promote the good health of our children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of fruit snacks, drinking water always being available and have regard to [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#). We capture any allergies and food intolerances and how this will be handled with parents prior to the child starting school. Within school we have 20 adults who hold Paediatric First aid qualification and are always available when children are present, including on outings. 7 adults in the EYFS settings are qualified. There is always qualified paediatric first aid member of staff with the children when eating. From September 2025 we follow the new guidelines to support safer eating along with nutrition guidance. [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#)

Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms, only the class iPads are used to photograph children (DCPro observations and assessment purposes) and children must be appropriately dressed in photographs.

Context and Organisation –

In line with our whole school vision we believe that all children are loved by God and united in learning. Our **INTENTION** in our Early Years Foundation Stage (Pre-School and Foundation) is to ensure that every child feels safe, happy and secure by creating an inclusive and welcoming ethos in which every child is valued and treated as a unique learner. By nurturing warm and positive relationships with every child we will enable them to make progress and achieve excellence in their learning.

We intend to set the foundations which will help our children to become emotionally and physically healthy and, through their 'have-a-go' attitude, will have the tools to embrace challenges and overcome barriers. Upon these foundations, we strive to build confident life-long learners who have a thirst for discovering and finding out.



Our children will develop the skills of independence, resourcefulness and resilience within their learning and these will be encompassed within the school's four values of Love, Inspiration, Courage and Unity.

Our curriculum is set on the principle that children learn best when they are settled and comfortable within the learning environment and that a child-centred approach for young children is crucial for their development and success. Therefore, our teaching and learning is carefully crafted to reflect the needs and interests of our children, with imagination and creativity woven throughout. Our practitioners are constantly evaluating and reviewing their practise to ensure excellence across the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We have one class in our **Pre-School** and this is led by a qualified teacher and supported by 3 teaching assistants (as well as 1:1 TA's wherever necessary). The pre-school is open 39 weeks a year (excluding INSET days), Monday to Friday.

Session times are as follows...

8.30am - 11.30am (15 Hours Universal Funded Hours)

12.30pm - 3.30pm (15 Hours Universal Funded Hours)

9am - 3pm (30 Hours Extended & Universal Funded Hours)

Children can attend either 5 full days or 5 half days (all mornings or all afternoons) each week.

Additional hours can be purchased at the following rates (payable in advance, subject to availability)...

Whole Morning Session - 8:30 - 11:30 (if not funded) - £17.10

Whole Afternoon Session - 12:30 - 3:30 (if not funded) - £17.10

Lunch Hour (if not funded) 11.30am - 12.30pm - £5.70

Outside of these hours, parents will be able to access the schools wrap around care (Lookout Club) subject to availability.

7.45am - 8.45am - Breakfast Club

3.30pm - 5.15pm - After School

Our children in Pre-School have access to the resources across the school including the music room, school hall, Forest School and SSSI.

We have three classes in Foundation and each of these is supported by a general class TA (as well as 1:1 TA's wherever necessary). Our children in Foundation benefit from accessing our Forest School as well as specialist teaching from a Sports Coach. The Foundation setting includes three classrooms as well as a central area that is used for creative learning, computing and role-play.

Both Pre-School and Foundation settings boast well-resourced, vibrant outside areas which are carefully designed to ensure children can enjoy learning outdoors whatever the weather. Outdoor learning is integral to our curriculum and our outside environment reflects this.



The Early Years Foundation Stage is led by Hannah Kassiri and is supported by the school's Assistant Headteacher and SENCo, Lucy Strickland.

15. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Early Years Team and at least one member of the Headship Team. The application will be monitored by the Headship Team and the Early Years Lead through learning walks, lesson observations, work scrutiny, talking with children and staff, and through professional development.

This is a working document which we hope gives an insight into the day-to-day workings of the Early Years Foundation Stage at school and the rationale upon which they are based.

The Early Years Leader works in collaboration with subject leaders to ensure that progression and provision is clear across each subject area and keeps staff up to date of any changes to Early Years legislation and guidance.

The EYFS provision will be monitored by the Headteacher / Deputy / Assistant Head, EYFS Leader, teachers with subject responsibility.

And will involve data analysis, action planning, team meetings, work scrutiny, moderation, lesson observations, CPD

The Policy will be adapted and amended in the light of experience and the needs of the children entering school. We seek to ensure a smooth transition from home to school and a sound foundation for their learning.

The Headteacher and Deputy, Governors, and staff will review this policy in line with the date, usually every other year unless there are Government changes.

16. Further information

Equal Opportunities

Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Act which came into force in April 2011, updated Dec 2023 Bishop Aldhelm's Primary School has due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

All members of our school community are of equal value regardless of:

- their ethnicity, culture, religion, nationality
- whether or not they are disabled
- their gender or gender identity
- their sexual identity
- We recognise and respect difference at Bishop Aldhelm's CE Primary School. Our curriculum aims to foster an appreciation of each other's cultures and beliefs along

17. Link to other HET policies

Behaviour policy

Complaints policy

Health and safety policy

Intimate care policy

Safeguarding and Child protection policy



