



## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

**‘Sowing the Seeds of tomorrow; growing in the light of the Lord’**

**At Read St. John’s we aim to unlock the potential for everyone to flourish whilst being rooted and grounded in God’s love. We aim high, so together as one family, we can fly.**

### **Intent**

At Read St John’s CE Primary School, our Early Years curriculum is designed to be fun, creative, challenging, memorable and inclusive, providing all children with exciting and purposeful learning opportunities.

We recognise that every child is unique and that early childhood is a crucial stage in children's development. The experiences children have during the Early Years provide the foundations upon which they build the rest of their lives. We therefore aim to provide a rich, ambitious and carefully sequenced curriculum which enables every child to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours they need to become successful, confident and lifelong learners.

Our curriculum broadens children's understanding of the world around them and provides opportunities to explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their learning.

We believe that children learn best when they feel safe, valued, respected and secure. Strong relationships between children, staff and families are fundamental to our provision. Through high-quality interactions, purposeful play and carefully planned teaching, we enable children to develop their independence, resilience, communication, curiosity and confidence.

We are ambitious for every child, regardless of their starting point, background, ability or individual circumstances. We aim to ensure that every child makes strong progress and is supported to reach their full potential.

**Our EYFS curriculum reflects our school values and Characters of Learning. We nurture children to become kind, caring, respectful, resilient and inquisitive learners who take pride in their achievements and strive to be the very best version of themselves.**

### **Introduction**

This policy is based on the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, which applies from 1 September 2026.

The EYFS sets the statutory standards that schools and early years providers must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to the end of the Reception Year.

At Read St John's, this applies to our Reception class, which children join at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

The EYFS is not simply preparation for the next stage of education. Early childhood is important in its own right, and children deserve high-quality experiences which support their development, wellbeing and enjoyment of learning.

Learning in the Early Years is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which children explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes.

We recognise the importance of play as a vehicle for learning. However, play is complemented by carefully planned adult-led and adult-guided teaching, high-quality interactions, modelling, questioning and opportunities for children to apply what they know.

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

SEND Policy

Behaviour Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Attendance Policy

Intimate Care Policy

Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy

First Aid Policy

Equality and Diversity Policy

Educational Visits Policy

## **Aims**

Our EYFS provision aims to ensure:

Children access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum which provides the knowledge and skills needed for future learning and life.

Children make good progress from their individual starting points.

Teaching and learning are of a consistently high quality.

Children's individual interests, needs and developmental stages are recognised.

Children develop positive attitudes towards learning.

Children become confident communicators and active learners.

Children develop independence, resilience and perseverance.

Children develop secure and positive relationships with adults and peers.

Children are included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Children with SEND and other additional needs receive appropriate support and reasonable adjustments.

Parents and carers are valued as partners in their child's learning and development.

Children are kept safe, healthy and well cared for.

Children develop the knowledge, skills and confidence required for a successful transition into Year 1.

## **Implementation**

### **Statutory Framework of the EYFS**

**We adhere to the EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective from 1 September 2026. The framework applies to school-based early years providers in England and sets the standards for learning, development and care.**

Our practice is shaped by the four guiding principles of the EYFS:

Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

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 build their learning over time. Children benefit from strong partnerships between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

As part of our practice, we:

Provide a secure, safe and stimulating learning environment indoors and outdoors.

Provide a balanced and ambitious curriculum across the seven areas of learning.

Use purposeful play alongside adult-led and adult-guided teaching.

Plan challenging experiences based on children's starting points, interests and developmental needs.

Use observation and assessment to inform teaching and planning.

Provide high-quality adult interactions that develop and deepen children's learning.

Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Provide early identification and intervention for children who require additional support.

Work closely with parents and carers.

Promote children's physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

Support children to develop independence, resilience and positive attitudes to learning.

Maintain high expectations for all children.

The EYFS Curriculum

We plan an exciting, ambitious and challenging curriculum based on our knowledge of children's starting points, interests, experiences and stages of development.

The seven areas of learning and development are interconnected and are all important.

### **Prime Areas**

The three prime areas are:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

These areas are particularly important for developing children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

### **Specific Areas**

The four specific areas are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

The specific areas strengthen and develop the learning established through the prime areas.

We ensure that children experience a rich balance of adult-led teaching, adult-guided learning and child-initiated experiences.

Our curriculum is carefully sequenced so that children build on previous learning. Important knowledge and skills are revisited regularly, allowing children to practise, consolidate and apply their learning in increasingly challenging contexts.

### **Communication and Language**

We place a particularly strong emphasis on communication and language.

Children are supported to:

Listen attentively.

Understand and follow instructions.

Develop a wide and varied vocabulary.

Express their ideas, feelings and experiences.

Participate in conversations.

Develop confidence when speaking to others.

Retell and discuss stories.

Understand increasingly complex language.

Develop the foundations for reading and writing.

Adults model high-quality language, introduce new vocabulary and provide opportunities for children to use and apply new words in meaningful contexts.

### **Physical Development**

Physical development is prioritised throughout the EYFS.

Children have frequent opportunities to develop:

Gross motor skills.

Fine motor skills.

Coordination.

Balance.

Strength.

Spatial awareness.

Hand and finger strength.

Pencil control.

Independence in personal care.

Children have regular access to outdoor learning and physical activity.

We teach children about healthy lifestyles, including exercise, nutrition, hygiene, rest and personal safety.

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

We support children to develop secure relationships, confidence, independence and emotional resilience.

Children learn to:

Recognise and manage their emotions.

Develop positive relationships.

Cooperate and play collaboratively.

Resolve disagreements appropriately.

Understand boundaries and expectations.

Take responsibility for themselves and their environment.

Persevere when learning becomes challenging.

Develop self-confidence.

Understand and respect differences.

Treat others with kindness, care and respect.

Our Characters of Learning are embedded within everyday interactions and experiences.

## **Literacy**

Children develop a love of books, stories, rhymes and language.

Our literacy curriculum provides opportunities for children to:

Develop phonological awareness.

Learn systematic phonics.

Develop comprehension.

Enjoy and discuss stories, poems and non-fiction.

Develop vocabulary.

Retell and create stories.

Develop writing skills.

Develop handwriting and fine motor control.

Write for meaningful purposes.

We provide daily opportunities for children to read and listen to high-quality texts.

## **Mathematics**

Mathematics is taught explicitly as well as being embedded throughout the provision.

Children develop secure foundations in:

Number.

Counting.

Subitising.

Cardinality.

Comparison.

Composition.

Pattern.

Shape.

Space.

Measure.

Mathematical vocabulary.

Problem-solving.

Adults model mathematical language and provide opportunities for children to apply their mathematical understanding in meaningful contexts.

We aim to develop children's confidence in and enjoyment of mathematics.

## **Understanding the World**

Children develop knowledge and understanding of the world through first-hand experiences and carefully planned learning.

Children explore:

People and communities.

Families and relationships.

Their local environment.

The natural world.

Seasons and weather.

Animals and plants.

Similarities and differences.

Past and present.

Technology.

Different cultures, traditions and beliefs.

We make purposeful use of our local community and wider environment to enrich children's learning.

### **Expressive Arts and Design**

Children are given opportunities to express themselves creatively through:

Art.

Design.

Painting.

Drawing.

Sculpture.

Music.

Singing.

Dance.

Drama.

Role play.

Imaginative play.

Design and technology.

We value children's creativity and encourage them to develop their own ideas, make choices, solve problems and take creative risks.

### **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning**

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners consider the different ways children learn.

**The three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning are:**

Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things and ‘have a go’.

Active learning – children concentrate, persevere and keep trying when they encounter difficulties.

Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

These characteristics are developed throughout the curriculum rather than taught as separate subjects.

They are closely linked to our Characters of Learning and our aspiration that children become resilient, independent and motivated learners.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Each area of learning is implemented through planned, purposeful experiences and a balance of adult-led, adult-guided and child-initiated learning.

Staff provide warm, positive and responsive interactions.

Adults:

Model language and behaviour.

Introduce new vocabulary.

Ask purposeful questions.

Encourage children to explain their thinking.

Model problem-solving.

Extend children's interests.

Challenge children's thinking.

Support children to make connections.

Provide appropriate scaffolding.

Encourage children to become increasingly independent.

As children develop, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-guided and adult-led learning, preparing children for the increased expectations of Year 1.

We recognise that children need time to practise and consolidate learning. Our provision therefore allows children to revisit experiences and apply skills in different contexts.

### **Curriculum Planning**

We create medium-term plans based on carefully selected themes and experiences which provide opportunities across all seven areas of learning.

At the beginning of each topic, children are encouraged to share their ideas, questions and interests. These contribute to our short-term planning.

Planning is also informed by:

Children's starting points.

Observations.

Assessment information.

Children's interests.

Individual needs.

SEND requirements.

Curriculum progression.

Professional knowledge of child development.

Planning remains flexible so that children's questions, interests and experiences can influence the curriculum.

We continually evaluate the effectiveness of our provision and adapt teaching to meet children's emerging needs.

### **Learning Environment**

We provide a stimulating, language-rich and enabling environment.

Children have access to carefully selected resources which encourage:

Exploration.

Creativity.

Independence.

Collaboration.

Problem-solving.

Communication.

Physical development.

Imaginative play.

Where possible, children are encouraged to move between indoor and outdoor learning environments.

Our environment is adapted to meet individual needs and promote accessibility and inclusion.

### **Assessment, Monitoring and Moderation**

Formative Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning.

Staff use observation, interaction and professional judgement to identify:

What children know and understand.

What children can do.

Children's interests.

Children's strengths.

Areas requiring further development.

Individual next steps.

Assessment is used to inform teaching and future planning.

We avoid unnecessary paperwork and ensure that assessment supports children's learning rather than taking staff away from meaningful interactions with children.

Children's achievements are recorded through their paper Learning Journal where appropriate.

Parents and carers are encouraged to share achievements and milestones from home.

The EYFS team regularly discusses children's progress and identifies children who may require additional support, intervention or further challenge.

#### Summative Assessment

Children are assessed at four agreed data points throughout the year using developmental assessment checkpoints:

Baseline.

Autumn 2.

Spring 2.

Summer 2.

These assessments are used to identify progress, gaps in learning and appropriate next steps.

#### **Statutory Assessments**

Within the first six weeks of starting Reception, staff administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) in accordance with statutory arrangements.

At the end of the EYFS, teachers complete the EYFS Profile for each child.

Children are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals and teachers make professional judgements as to whether children are:

Meeting expected levels of development; or

Not yet reaching expected levels of development ('emerging').

The EYFS Profile is informed by ongoing observation, assessment and professional knowledge.

Parents and carers are informed of their child's EYFS Profile outcomes.

Assessment is inclusive and appropriate adjustments are made where necessary for children with SEND.

EYFS Profile information is used to support transition into Year 1 and ensure that the Year 1 curriculum builds upon children's existing knowledge, skills and developmental needs.

#### **Moderation**

EYFS assessment judgements are moderated internally and, where appropriate, through partnership with other local schools.

Moderation supports consistency, accuracy and confidence in professional assessment judgements.

EYFS Profile data is submitted to the local authority in accordance with statutory requirements.

## **Monitoring of the EYFS**

The EYFS Lead is responsible for monitoring the quality of provision, teaching and learning and children's progress.

Information is shared with the Headteacher, Assessment Leader, SENDCO and Reception team as appropriate.

Monitoring includes consideration of:

Curriculum implementation.

Children's progress.

Quality of teaching and interactions.

Learning environments.

Assessment.

Inclusion.

Safeguarding and welfare.

Parent partnership.

Staff development.

Transition.

Any necessary actions are identified and reviewed.

All EYFS staff have a key role in children's learning and development and are expected to maintain appropriate knowledge and understanding of the EYFS curriculum.

Training needs are identified through induction, supervision, professional development and performance management.

## **The Role of Parents and Carers**

We recognise parents and carers as children's first educators and value their knowledge of their child.

Children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between home and school.

Each child is assigned a key person, normally the class teacher, who helps ensure that learning and care are tailored to the child's individual needs.

We welcome and actively encourage parents and carers to participate in their child's education through:

Information evenings before children start school.

A welcoming and approachable environment.

An open-door approach where appropriate.

Parent meetings in the Autumn and Spring terms.

Contributions to children's learning journeys.

Reading with children at home.

Sharing achievements and milestones from home.

Curriculum overviews and suggestions for home learning.

Parent phonics sessions.

Regular communication about learning and development.

An annual end-of-year report and EYFS Profile information.

We also draw upon links with our local community to enrich children's experiences through educational visits, visitors and community experiences.

### **Safeguarding and Welfare**

The safety, welfare and wellbeing of our children is paramount.

**We comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework effective from September 2026 and work in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and relevant statutory guidance.**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We ensure that:

Children's welfare is promoted.

Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

Safeguarding concerns are identified and acted upon promptly.

Appropriate records are maintained.

Staff know how and when to report concerns.

Children are taught how to keep themselves safe.

The environment is safe and suitable.

Adults working with children are suitable to do so.

Appropriate first aid arrangements are in place.

Children's physical and emotional wellbeing is supported.

The school has a dedicated safeguarding team, including three Designated Safeguarding Leads, one of whom is the EYFS Lead.

### **Safeguarding Training**

All EYFS practitioners receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

Safeguarding training is renewed at least every two years, with additional refresher training provided where appropriate.

Staff are expected to remain vigilant and understand the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect and how these may present in young children, including children with SEND.

### **Allegations of Harm**

Any allegation of harm or abuse involving a person living, working or looking after children will be taken seriously and dealt with immediately.

The school follows its safeguarding procedures and makes referrals to appropriate external agencies where required.

Where statutory notification is required, the school will notify the relevant authority in accordance with the EYFS framework.

### **Safer Recruitment and Staff Suitability**

All adults working with children must be suitable to do so.

The school follows robust safer recruitment procedures and completes the required checks before individuals work with children.

Appropriate enhanced criminal record and barred-list checks are completed for relevant staff and volunteers.

New staff and volunteers will not begin working with children until the required checks have been completed, except where a specific statutory exception applies.

The school maintains appropriate records relating to staff suitability.

### **Staff Induction, Supervision and Development**

All new EYFS staff receive an appropriate induction covering:

Safeguarding.

Health and safety.

First aid.

Emergency procedures.

Behaviour and relationships.

SEND and inclusion.

EYFS curriculum and expectations.

School policies and procedures.

Staff receive ongoing supervision, support and professional development.

Supervision provides opportunities to discuss children's learning and development, safeguarding, wellbeing, professional practice and areas for development.

Leaders ensure that staff receive appropriate training and feedback and that professional development supports high-quality practice.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

We promote children's physical and emotional health throughout the EYFS.

We teach children about:

Healthy eating.

Physical activity.

Oral health.

Personal hygiene.

Handwashing.

Rest.

Emotional wellbeing.

Personal safety.

Healthy choices.

Children have access to drinking water throughout the day and are provided with nutritious snacks.

We provide significant opportunities for physical development and active outdoor learning.

### **Oral Health**

We teach children about the importance of:

Brushing their teeth.

Limiting sugary foods and drinks.

Making healthy choices.

Looking after their teeth.

We work with parents and carers to reinforce positive oral-health messages.

### **Food, Allergies and Safer Eating**

We obtain information from parents and carers regarding children's dietary requirements, allergies and intolerances.

Where necessary, individual allergy or dietary plans are developed and communicated to relevant staff.

Staff understand the risks associated with allergies and anaphylaxis and know how to respond to an allergic reaction.

Children are appropriately supervised while eating.

Food is prepared and served in ways that take account of children's developmental stages and choking risks.

Children are seated safely while eating and remain within the sight and hearing of staff.

Any significant choking incident is appropriately recorded, reported and reviewed.

We follow the relevant EYFS nutrition and safer-eating requirements.

### **Illness and Accidents**

We follow school procedures when children become unwell or have an accident.

Parents and carers are informed where appropriate.

Accidents, injuries and significant incidents are recorded in accordance with school procedures.

At least one member of staff with appropriate paediatric first aid training is available in accordance with statutory requirements.

### **Intimate Care**

The school is committed to ensuring that all intimate care is provided in a safe, respectful, sensitive and child-centred manner.

Intimate care may include:

Toileting.

Changing soiled clothing.

Personal hygiene.

Other age-appropriate care needs.

Staff encourage children to develop independence wherever possible.

Staff explain procedures to children, seek their cooperation, protect dignity and privacy and maintain appropriate hygiene.

Where regular intimate care is required, an individual care plan may be agreed with parents and carers.

All intimate care is undertaken in accordance with safeguarding, health and safety and school procedures.

### **Digital Technology and Screen Use**

We recognise that digital technology can support children's learning when used purposefully and appropriately.

Digital experiences do not replace opportunities for:

Talk.

Play.

Physical activity.

Outdoor learning.

Books.

Practical exploration.

Creativity.

Real-world experiences.

We have regard to the Department for Education guidance on children's screen use in early years settings.

Screen use is purposeful, age-appropriate and balanced.

School devices are used in accordance with safeguarding, online safety and data protection requirements.

### **Mobile Phones, Cameras and Photographs**

Staff and visitors **are not permitted to use personal mobile phones in the EYFS classroom.**

Only school-approved devices are used to photograph children for legitimate educational and assessment purposes.

Images are stored and shared securely in accordance with school procedures and data protection requirements.

Children are appropriately dressed and their dignity and privacy are protected at all times.

### **Safety of the Environment**

We provide a safe, secure and appropriately challenging learning environment.

Staff regularly check the indoor and outdoor environment and equipment.

We ensure that:

Equipment is safe and suitable.

Furniture is appropriate.

Hazards are identified and addressed.

Risk assessments are undertaken where necessary.

Emergency procedures are understood.

Children are appropriately supervised.

Outdoor areas are safe.

Children have regular opportunities for outdoor learning.

We recognise that children benefit from appropriate challenge and opportunities to develop an understanding of risk. Adults therefore support children to learn how to assess and manage age-appropriate risks safely.

### **Animals and Dogs**

The school will ensure compliance with the 2026 EYFS requirements relating to banned dog breeds.

Registered EYFS provision must not be provided on premises where a banned dog breed is kept or is otherwise present.

Appropriate arrangements are made where animals are brought onto school premises for educational purposes.

### **Inclusion**

We value every child as an individual, irrespective of:

Ethnicity.

Culture.

Religion.

Home language.

Background.

Ability.

Gender.

Family circumstances.

SEND.

We plan an ambitious curriculum that meets individual children's needs and supports them to progress at their own rate.

We recognise that some children require additional support to access the curriculum and achieve their potential.

We work closely with:

Parents and carers.

The SENDCO.

External professionals.

Early Years specialists.

Other agencies where appropriate.

Early identification is crucial. Where concerns arise, appropriate action is taken promptly.

Children with SEND are fully included in the EYFS curriculum and assessment process. Reasonable adjustments are made where appropriate.

We also identify and support children who demonstrate particular strengths or talents, ensuring that they are appropriately challenged.

### **Equality and Anti-Discriminatory Practice**

We promote equality of opportunity for all children.

Children are supported to recognise and celebrate similarities and differences between themselves and others.

We challenge discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour appropriately.

Books, resources, displays and learning experiences reflect the diversity of the children, families and wider community.

All children are encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards others and understand the importance of kindness, respect and inclusion.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

Regular attendance is important for children's learning, development, wellbeing and safeguarding.

We promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality with families.

Unexplained or prolonged absences are followed up promptly.

Attendance patterns are considered alongside children's individual circumstances and safeguarding information.

Where absence raises a safeguarding concern, the school's safeguarding procedures are followed.

### **Transition**

We recognise that effective transition supports children's wellbeing, confidence and learning.

Before children start Reception, we provide opportunities for children and families to become familiar with the school.

Transition information is gathered from parents, carers and previous settings where appropriate.

We ensure that relevant information is shared with Year 1 staff to support continuity and progression.

Transition is carefully planned to ensure that children move successfully from the EYFS into Key Stage 1.

### **Impact**

An integral aspect of our EYFS curriculum is preparing children for their future.

During their time at Read St John's, children develop into confident, capable and caring individuals who are ready for the next stage of their education.

From their different starting points, children make good progress academically, emotionally, creatively, socially and physically.

Knowledge, understanding and skills are secured and embedded so that children are well prepared for Key Stage 1.

### **By the end of Reception, children will:**

Have developed strong communication and language skills.

Listen respectfully and with tolerance to the views of others.

Have developed secure foundations in literacy and mathematics.

Demonstrate increasing independence.

Take pride in their achievements and strive to do their best.

Demonstrate emotional resilience.

Persevere when they encounter challenge.

Demonstrate the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning.

Develop confidence in their own abilities.

Form positive and respectful relationships.

Be kind, caring and honest.

Demonstrate inclusive attitudes.

Understand their role within the wider community.

Show curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

Apply their knowledge and skills across different contexts.

Be increasingly able to manage their emotions and behaviour.

Be confident to explore, investigate and ask questions.

Be ready for the expectations of Year 1.

We want our children to become well-rounded, happy, inquisitive and successful learners who have developed the essential knowledge, skills and positive attitudes required for everyday life and lifelong learning.

Every child is unique and has the potential to achieve. Our broad and varied curriculum allows every child to excel based upon their individual strengths, interests and characteristics.

**Our ultimate aim is for every child to leave the EYFS as the very best version of themselves, ready to flourish in the next stage of their education and beyond.**

Appendix - Useful Links

Statutory Documents

[Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

[Link to Early Years Foundation Stage Profile](#)

Non-Statutory Documents

[Link to Development Matters](#)

[Link to Birth to 5](#)

This EYFS policy outlines the intent, implementation and impact of the teaching and learning of all aspects of the EYFS. It has been written by the EYFS lead Joanne Shaw and reviewed by the headteacher and governors.

Based on: Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective from 1 September 2026

Review date: September 2027