



St Aidan's

Church of England Primary Academy
A member of **CDARI**

'Fulfilling potential and growing in God.'



Acceptance, Love, Wisdom, Accountability, Youthfulness, Service

Our Vision

At St. Aidan's, not only do we want our children to become happy and well rounded individuals; we aim to nurture and equip children to be resilient, enthusiastic and effective communicators and learners who are able to use their experiences and technology skills to achieve their fullest potential allowing them to excel in the careers of the future and grow in God.

'I came that they may have life and live it to the full' John 10.10

EYFS Policy

St. Aidan's Church of England Primary Academy

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five 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 together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

At St. Aidan's, we follow the EYFS statutory framework, which sets the standard that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress.

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

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The learning and development requirements cover:

- the areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early years settings
- the early learning goals that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five)
- assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers)

The safeguarding and welfare requirements cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

Four guiding principles shape the practice in our early years setting. These are:

- 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, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, including children with special educational needs and disabilities. The characteristics of effective teaching and learning are central to our practice.

Learning and Development

Curriculum Content

In EYFS we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, which we teach through the use of Development Matters, with a focus on the Strong Foundations In The First Years Of School document.

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise:

- The seven areas of learning and development and the educational programmes (described below)
- The early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception year
- The assessment requirements (when and how practitioners must assess children's achievements, and when and how they should discuss children's progress with parents and/or carers)

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes at St. Aidan's. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development

- Personal, social and emotional development

The four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied are:

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

See the Statutory EYFS Framework for more information regarding the 7 areas of learning, including the Early Learning Goals.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Organisation and Implementation

Planning

The EYFS curriculum must:

- Be shaped by the educational programmes, as set out under each of the areas of learning.
- Be well planned, designed and implemented
- Be the product of clear consideration of the sequence of knowledge necessary for all children to make progress
- Consider what the children should know and remember in preparation for the next stage and later learning
- Ensure that all children are ready for the challenges that await them
- Meet the needs of all children, particularly any children with SEND
- Consider and identify the start and end points of learning
- Be broken down into smaller steps that lead to these endpoints

- Be based on proactive thinking
- Ensure that all children feel safe, secure, stimulated and happy
- Plan for a language-rich environment, where high quality interactions take place

Long Term Plans:

There is a long term plan in place which indicates key teaching and learning over each half term. Our curriculum is book based in order to promote a love of reading and give every child the opportunity to experience high quality texts.

Medium Term Plan:

EYFS staff and SLT meet before the following half term to discuss data and targets- both whole class and individual. In Reception, teachers are to use White Rose Maths, Little Wandle, SCARF and Questful RE schemes of work. Essential learning experiences are mapped out, in order for children's cultural capital to be enhanced and to give children the best possible start to their education.

Weekly Plan:

EYFS staff meet weekly to share and discuss the planning for the following week. Staff must plan to enhance the areas of provision, linking to the children's prior learning, needs, interests and areas of development. This time must also be used for staff to discuss any concerns they may have (Supervision.)

Staff are to follow the planning format saved on our Google Drive, which outlines development matters objectives, inputs and focused activities. When planning, practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, start and end points and stage of development of each child. Practitioners must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development. Key texts, vocabulary and language must be planned for. Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive, high quality interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Adult Led Activities:

Reception – Autumn 1 – Teacher to carry out formal Reception Baseline Assessments. TAs to carry out informal baseline activities. Develop relationships, settle in and train the children in the routines of the setting.

Autumn 2 – Summer 2 – 2 adult led focused activities for the week (one with a maths focus), so that adults are available to engage in high quality interactions and play in the environment. Adults also complete 'Focus Child' observations, phonics writing and reading practice with the children.

There must always be an adult who is teaching through taking part in enhanced provision. This role must prioritise:

- back-and-forth high quality interactions
- conversations
- new vocabulary
- frequent exposure to books and extensive occasions to use and embed new words
- opportunities for children to become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

According to the revised Reading Guidance from the DfE:

To improve vocabulary in EYFS, back and forth interactions involve the adult in:

- thinking out loud, modelling new language for children
- paying close attention to what the children say
- rephrasing and extending what the children say
- validating the children's attempts at using new vocabulary and grammar by rephrasing what children say if necessary
- asking closed and open questions
- answering the children's questions
- explaining why things happen
- deliberately connecting current and past events ('Do you remember when...?')
- providing models of accurate grammar
- extending children's vocabulary and explaining new words
- connecting one idea or action to another
- helping children to articulate ideas in well-formed sentences.

All adults working in our EYFS have regular CPD to ensure they are up to date with best practices, changes in legislation, new research in child development, and new teaching methods. We attend regular Cidari (MAT), Blackburn with Darwen (LA) and Lancashire cluster meetings.

Focus Child

Each week we identify focus children (5 per week approximately) to observe and support in provision. We work on these children's targets and use this time to set new

ones. These targets are displayed on our I am Unique wall in order for all staff to be aware of them.

Timetable:

Here is an outline of our timetable-

	8.40- 8.55	8.55- 9.15	9.15- 10.30	10.30- 10.45	10.45-12		12-2.45	2.45-3.20
Mon	-Wake and Shake -Days of the week -Visual Timetable -Registration	Worship-window to the world	Lunch orders Observations / Provision train Reading practice	Key Person snack time: News time Nurture Group	Number fun song Maths	Lunch Teeth brushing	Phonics Provision	Story time
Tue	-Wake and Shake -Days of the week -Visual Timetable -Registration	Worship-Rev Alice	Lunch orders Phonics Interventions - WellComm/ Phonics/S&L	Key Person snack time: Pupil Voice	Number fun song Maths		Physical Development Provision	Library
Wed	-Wake and Shake -Days of the week -Visual Timetable -Registration	Worship-prayer and praise	Lunch orders Phonics Reading practice	Snack time-whole class Picture news Nurture Group	Number fun song Maths		RE Provision	Story time
Thurs	-Wake and Shake -Days of the week -Visual Timetable -Registration	Worship-Celebration	Lunch orders Phonics Interventions - WellComm/Phonics/S&L	Key Person snack time: Recap our learning (dojo/scrap book/time line)	Number fun song Maths		PSED Provision	Rhyme Time with parents
Fri	-Wake and Shake -Days of the week -Visual Timetable -Registration/ lunch orders		Phonics Books we Know	Snack time: number blocks	Number fun song Maths	(Lunch at 11.45)	Dough Disco/ Pen Party Provision	Story time

- Some of the afternoon sessions may change slightly and themes will run throughout the week.

Interventions

All children to be assessed using WellComm on entry. Children are then reassessed at key points throughout the year, as specified by Blackburn with Darwen Local Authority. Following this, the children will be grouped and weekly interventions will be carried out, based on their next steps. Interventions will also take place based on children's individual next steps and identified needs, for example Nurture Group, phonics, fine motor skills or maths.

Parents as Partners

Parents are a child's first teacher. In EYFS we build effective partnerships with parents through a thorough transition process, which involves a welcome meeting, 1:1 parent meetings during home visits, stay and play sessions and a staggered intake. This enables us to foster excellent partnerships with parents and carers, and enables children to feel safe and secure when starting our setting. We continue to build these relationships with daily conversations, the use of Class Dojo to communicate and to explain learning, Rhyme Time sessions, Stay and Play sessions and parents meetings. We have a yearly calendar of events to ensure we plan for regular opportunities to have parents and carers into class.

Assessment and Record Keeping

In Reception, the children have an individual portfolio on Class Dojo and a literacy book. Their portfolio evidences independent work that the children have produced in continuous provision. Guided work, completed with a teacher or teaching assistant is recorded in their literacy book or in a class Scrap Book, with individual notes filled in on an Assessment Sheet. We have Scrap Books for Maths, RE, PSHE and Understanding the World (Science, Geography and History). Insight is used to assess and track children's learning and development. A baseline of each child is inputted on entry to Reception, then we track their progress in Autumn 2, Spring 2 and Summer 2.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Child Protection

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We set out and follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to create a high-quality setting which is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children

are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. We take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well; safeguard children; ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children; promote good health; manage behaviour; and maintain records, policies and procedures. Please see the safeguarding section of St. Aidan's 's Policy and Procedures for more details.

Staff

We have effective systems and policies in place to ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles. Please see St. Aidan's safeguarding policies for further details.

Ratios –

Reception classes in maintained schools and academies are subject to infant class size legislation. The School Admissions (Infant Class Size) Regulations 2012 limit the size of infant classes to 30 pupils per school teacher (subject to permitted exceptions) while an ordinary teaching session is conducted. 'School teachers' do not include teaching assistants, higher level teaching assistants or other support staff.

Consequently, in an ordinary teaching session, a school must employ sufficient school teachers to enable it to teach its infant classes in groups of no more than 30 per school teacher.

Key Person

Each child is assigned a key person. The key person must help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person must seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

Health and Safety

See Health and Safety policies.

Managing Behaviour

St. Aidan's has high expectations of its pupils and creates an atmosphere which enables children to manage and self-regulate their own behaviour. Please see our behaviour policy for more details.

Special Educational Needs and Inclusive Practice

Throughout the early years, if a child's progress in any area gives cause for concern, practitioners must discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how

to support the child. Practitioners must consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. They should link with, and help families to access, relevant services from other agencies as appropriate, following St. Aidan's 's procedures around referring children. We aim to give all children, irrespective of age, gender or ethnic origin equal opportunity to make maximum progress. It is expected that all children will be given the opportunity to learn in a creative and encouraging learning environment which encompasses a range of learning and teaching styles. All children are entitled to this. It is hoped that this approach will motivate and support children's learning at all levels.

EAL and children identified with a Special Educational Need or Disabilities (SEND)

For children whose home language is not English, staff must take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. Providers must also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS: ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, practitioners must assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of the English language, practitioners must explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

Conclusion

This EYFS policy serves as a guide to ensuring that our setting provides a nurturing, inclusive, and stimulating environment for all children. Through a commitment to high-quality early education, strong partnerships with parents, and adherence to the EYFS framework, we aim to give every child the best start in life.

Date policy was written:

December 2025

Date of policy to be reviewed: September 2026