

EYFS Policy



“At St Mary’s, we believe that ordinary people can choose to be extraordinary people”

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday.

The EYFS is statutory and is detailed under the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* and the *Practical Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage*. (Development Matters)

INTENT

We follow the statutory framework and guidance detailed in the EYFS using our extensive experience we observe, plan and teach children in early years.

“We aim to provide a learning environment in which everyone feels happy, safe and supported, where the evidence of God’s love is ever present.”

This policy reflects the school values and philosophy in relation to the teaching and learning of at St Mary’s Newchurch-in-Pendle C of E Academy. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate and give guidance so that all children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.

We provide a broad and balanced Early Years curriculum: -

- o based on first hand experiences and purposeful interactions o through ‘in the moment planning’ opportunities and carefully planned adult or child-initiated activities
- o whilst having a regard for the skills and attitudes the Key Stage One curriculum will demand

- We aim to make the child's first experience of school happy, positive and fun. - We aim to foster a love of learning and develop enquiring minds through promoting
- We aim to instil the Characteristics of Effective Learning such as independence, resilience and confidence
- We aim to promote emotional well-being
- We aim to build positive relationships and work in partnership with families (recognising that parents are their child's first and foremost educator), carers and professionals to support every child to develop and learn.

Curriculum Intent

Our aim for EYFS learning

Engagement, Enjoyment, Discovery, Reflection, Achievement

Our aim is to deliver teaching and learning which meets the needs of every single child through high quality early education provision. We have a balanced approach - we combine adult-led activities and core experiences. The children are taught the core foundational skills they need to build upon their learning. Building upon previous learning to ensure excellent progress.

Teaching in the EYFS:

- Has a carefully planned curriculum which aims for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS.
- Involves creating adult and child-initiated opportunities that will encourage children to explore, create, investigate, rehearse, practise, repeat and discover
- Involves developing Characteristics of Effective Learning
- Uses a multi-sensory, play-based approach
 - Shows awareness of the different ways and rates by which children develop and learn; that there are many factors affecting achievement including ability, emotional state, age and maturity, and how this informs teaching strategies.
- Has a high expectation of children's behaviour and attainment.
- Recognises the importance of emotional well-being.
- Is outside as much as possible ensuring children take ownership of their learning

Learning in the EYFS

- Through a comprehensive induction programme from home to Nursery and/or from a child's F1 setting to F2 we ensure prior learning and development is valued and the transition into School is supported.

- We encourage cross-curricular links to ensure a seamless transition into Key Stage One by building on previous experiences and planning those for the future.
- In the EYFS children are learning when they: -
 - Collaborate and learn from one another through shared experiences ● Are supported to set their own challenges in their physical environment and in their learning
 - Access resources independently
 - Use their senses to explore and investigate
 - Develop persistence and positive attitudes to learning as detailed in the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Play in the EYFS

We highly value play and the learning it brings in itself. Anyone who has observed play for any length of time will recognise that, for young children, play is a tool for learning.

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules thereby developing emotional resilience and self-regulation.

Children have the opportunity to think creatively and problem solve alongside others. They express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations as well as re-enact positive experiences building self-awareness and self-esteem.

Inclusion in the EYFS

In consultation and working collaboratively with parents/guardians the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) will lead on provision for children who may experience barriers to their learning, which may relate to sensory or physical impairment, learning difficulties or emotional or social development in line with the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice (2014) and the school's SEN/Inclusion Policy.

We aim to meet the needs of all our children by: -

Setting realistic and challenging expectations. We aim for all children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS. We achieve this by planning for different learning styles, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities or medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds as well as children with diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contributions of all children are valued.

Using resources, which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping which all children have equal access to.

Monitoring children's progress and providing support where necessary, within the

resources available to the school. This may include a phased transition programme dependant on a child's specific SEN needs.

Providing specific targets detailed in Individual Support Plans (ISP) and following external therapy or support programmes of work such as Speech and Language Working collaboratively with families or carers, the SENCo and other professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists and Parent Support Advisor.

Ensuring a balance across classes, within each cohort, of gender, ability, children with additional learning or medical needs and summer born children.

Acknowledging the wishes of parents and carers of twins and multiple birth siblings regarding class allocation in the EYFS. Following discussions with parents and carers the school's usual practice is for twins and multiple birth siblings to be allocated to separate classes in Year 1.

The EYFS Curriculum

Our curriculum is based upon the EYFS statutory framework and 'Development Matters' guidance, along with the children's interests and their developmental needs. Our curriculum is designed to give children the strong foundational knowledge and understanding needed to prepare them for year 1 and beyond. We have developed early years progression documents for all the key subject areas which clearly link our

provision to the concepts and knowledge in the national curriculum taught in Ks1 and Ks2.

The EYFS is statutory and is important in its own right as a basis for developing essential skills such as listening, speaking, persistence and collaborating with each other. The three prime areas cover the knowledge and skills which are the foundations for future progress, and which are applied and reinforced by the specific areas. All areas of learning are equally important and are interlinked.

The 3 prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

Communication and language

Physical development

Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

The Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals guide our long term planning together with the termly topics. In F1 activities are planned around the children's current needs, schemas and interests to ensure all areas of the EYFS curriculum are embraced.

Medium term planning is completed half termly and identifies the intended learning outcomes and takes into account children working at the exceeding level. Weekly Planning focuses on day-to-day organisation of activities. It takes into account that children's learning is not necessarily sequential and that they may need time to consolidate, repeat and extend their learning in their own way. All planning is evaluated on an on-going basis and adapted in response to the children's needs and interests.

Assessment in the EYFS

During the children's first half term in , the teacher assesses each child's development and learning attainment against the criteria set out in Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals. It is also a time for the teacher to discover the unique personality and interests of each child.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure future planning reflects individual or group needs. Once a term, summative assessments are entered on to Sonar (assessment tool used by the whole school).

Working with Parents/ carers

We recognise the importance of working alongside parents and other significant adults during a child's education. We do this through: -

- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.

- Giving the children the opportunity to spend several mornings or afternoons with their teacher before starting school.

- Inviting new parents into the classroom in their child's first term to take part in Foundation activities.

- Providing formal meetings for parents during the school year to discuss children's progress.

- Welcoming parents to discuss any concerns with the teacher and/or teaching assistants.

- Working to build good relationships with families to promote a regular two-way flow of information.

- Send out surveys to parents

The Environment and Resources in the EYFS

A rich and varied 'enabling' environment is actively planned for and continuously developed with varied multi-cultural and inclusive resources to encourage exploratory play-based learning and challenge. The learning environment encompasses both indoor and outdoor provision, which are of equal importance. Children are encouraged to experience all areas of the learning environment in all weathers. We encourage children to plan their own selection of activities balanced with adult initiated activities.

IMPACT

- Children in Reception make good progress and the majority reach the ELG by the end of Summer and are year 1 ready
- Children develop the characteristics of effective learning through the use of developing strong foundational knowledge which helps them through the rest of school
- Children develop the ability to manage risks
- Children enjoy being independent in managing themselves and their learning - Children have high levels of wellbeing and involvement

Date of review: April 2026

Next review: April 2027

Reviewed by: Kate Bell