



EYFS POLICY

Updated: September 2024
Review Date: September 2026

At St Peter's RC Primary School we believe the Early Years Foundation Stage is a critical time for children's academic and personal development and we will strive to do all we can to ensure children get a personalised, relevant and enjoyable introduction to school life. We expect our children to make very good progress and our staff to maintain high standards in order to deliver the foundation blocks for learning. This policy therefore outlines the entitlements, procedures and structures that we have in place to enable such progress to happen for our children.

Aims:

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing confidence

The Curriculum

Our curriculum is based upon the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Guidance (EYFS) which is based around seven Areas of Learning and three Characteristics of Effective Learning. This is outlined in the Development Matters document (non-statutory) which is available to download at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007446/6.7534_DfE_Development_Matters_Report_and_illustrations_web_2_.pdf

The **areas of learning** are split into **Prime** and **Specific** areas:

Prime

Communication and Language - Listening, attention and Understanding and Speaking

Physical Development - Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills

Personal, Social and Emotional Development - Self Regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships

Specific

Literacy - Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing

Mathematics - Number and Numerical Patterns

Understanding the World - Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities and The Natural World

Expressive Arts and Design - Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative and Expressive

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Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities within the Nursery and Reception classrooms with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics 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

Teaching strategies

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning.

The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

By the Summer Term in Reception the children will experience many more adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to year 1.

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years curriculum. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using interesting topics as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own.

They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions.

Teaching

It is important that the teaching and learning reflects the understanding that children within the EYFS should be given uninterrupted time to work in depth (sustained shared thinking). There should be a balance between adult-led and child initiated interactions, moving towards an increased amount of adult-led activities as children mature. However, this balance needs to reflect the individual needs of our children and more child-initiated activities will be appropriate for some.

To encourage children to become active, confident learners, teachers should plan for children to learn in a variety of different ways, for example: a multisensory approach, through creative and

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imaginative play and through conversation and questioning. Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. This looks different in the Nursery and Reception classes. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our topic work, Mathematics, Literacy, Phonics, and stories.

Planning

We have a two year topic between Nursery and Reception to ensure children explore new themes during their time in EYFS.

Staff initially use medium term plans for the topic. They then plan in more detail on a weekly basis.

Our half termly topics are listed below:

<u>Nursery</u>	
Autumn 1 All about me	Autumn 2 People Who Help Us
Spring 1 Rhyme Time	Spring 2 Growing
Summer 1 Journeys	Summer 2 Seaside

<u>Reception</u>	
Autumn 1 Making Friends	Autumn 2 Traditional Tales
Spring 1 Beasts, big and small	Spring 2 Pets
Summer 1 Food and Farming	Summer 2 Amazing Africa

Classroom organisation

Our Early Years classrooms have defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. Each classroom is set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning. Classrooms have a writing area, maths area, creative area, book corner, role play area, construction/small world area, investigation area, outdoor area and carpeted teaching area. A variety of activities are planned for and set up in the different areas each day.

The outdoor area is an important part of the classroom with many children choosing to learn outside for much of the day. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths games, reading and for construction. There are also opportunities for physical activity which includes climbing, running, cycling and other active games.

Assessment, Observations and Special Books

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves all staff observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies:

We collect children's work, photos and observations in children's individual Learning Journey's.

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In Reception, the children's work is also recorded in exercise books in addition to their Learning Journey's.

Parents have access to the Learning Journey's and exercise books during termly parental consultations. They are encouraged to contribute to Learning Journey's through the use of termly questionnaires regarding their children's progress.

On entry to Nursery and Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. Throughout the Early Years the Class Teacher submits end of term assessment data to show each child's development across the seven areas of learning.

At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging' or 'expected'.

Children's end of year levels (Nursery and Reception) are also communicated to parents and carers in the end of year report and can be discussed in the final Parents' Evening.

Roles of Staff and Key Worker

Each child in Nursery will be assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents. All adults within the Early Years setting actively seek to form positive respectful relationships with the children in their care.

There are rare occasions when significant adults cannot be in the class and we aim to be consistent in who covers these absences.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting.

As well as the Nursery and Reception visit days we offer a 'Meet the Teacher' session at the beginning of the school year and offer workshops and stay and learn sessions at different times throughout the year also.

Behaviour Management

Our 'Going for Gold' behaviour policy provides:

- A consistent and fair approach to behaviour management
- Clear systems to reward good behaviour and sanctions for inappropriate behaviour.
- A system that allows children to take ownership of their behaviour and their rewards.

We will.....

1. Listen to and co-operate with each other.

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2. Treat everyone with politeness, kindness and respect.
3. Work to the best of our ability.
4. Move safely and calmly around school.
5. Respect each other's property.
6. Take care of our school environment.

Principles:

- Each day is a new day.
- Each class has a behaviour chart and each day all children begin on the rainbow to demonstrate the expectation that every day, both in class and on the playground, it will be a positive one.
- Children can move up the chart for good behaviour to the rainbow and pot of gold.
- Children know that there are consequences when making inappropriate behaviour choices, and they will be moved down the chart to the umbrella (first warning), raindrop (time out) or thunderbolt (Mrs Scott).

In addition:

- Members of staff are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. Members of staff do however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's Learning Journeys, in class displays, on Google Classroom, Twitter and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.
- We encourage all children to start school without nappies and are unfortunately unable to accommodate any children who are not toilet trained by the time they start in Nursery/Reception (unless the child has a medical condition). We will obviously support any children struggling with this however, we may need to put in place a reduced timetable until the child is ready to come to school fully toilet trained. We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' (i.e. wet themselves!) and have stocks of spare clothes and change anyone who needs it. We ask parents to help keep our stocks of clothes high by returning anything their child has borrowed. Children are changed in the open area outside the toilets in each classroom
- Daily risk assessments of the outdoor area are conducted by Nursery Nurses and Teaching Assistants and any dangers; animal faeces, rubbish, etc are removed before children go out
- Fiona Sapiano (SENDCO/Assistant Headteacher) is the designated safeguarding lead and Clare Scott (Headteacher), Rebecca Anthony (Deputy Headteacher) and Stephanie Doe (Class Teacher) are the named deputy designated safeguarding officers. All concerns are shared with them