

**St James's**  
Church of England  
**Primary School**



Faith  
Friendship  
Fulfilment

## EYFS Policy

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Ratified on:

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Written by Sarah Mason

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

At St James's C.E Primary School, we believe all children have a right to be kept healthy and safe at school in an environment where they are best able to enjoy and achieve. We believe that we are crucial in laying the foundations for all children to make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being. Our approach to learning and development set out in this document, delivered within a secure and healthy environment, will maximise individual children's progress through well-planned play based on the interests, and developmental needs of each child. We offer 3 services in our Early Years Foundation Stage which are:

### Playgroup

Playgroup opens for four morning sessions a week from 9.00am to 11.30am and pupils start the term after their second birthday. Our staff to pupil ratio is 1:4 and the setting is led by a HLTA. Parents are charged to access Playgroup unless they are eligible for the local authority Time 4 Two's funding. There are three intakes: September, January and April. A range of activities from the 7 areas of learning within the EYFS are available each week and are carefully planned for by the play-group leader.

### Pre-school

At St James's C.E we offer up to 15 hour Nursery places for children to attend. Parents can select up to 5 morning sessions **or** up to five afternoons sessions, however morning sessions will not be available once full. Morning sessions run from 8.30am - 11.30am and afternoons sessions run from 12.15pm – 3.15pm. The setting is run by a HLTA and our staff to pupil ratio is 1:8. The Pre-school is registered for nursery education funding and has three intakes: September, January and April. All Pre-school activities are planned by the Pre-school leader around the 7 areas of learning from the EYFS development matters.

### Reception

Our children end their Early Years education in the Reception year. Our Reception curriculum is planned and delivered by two class teachers. The Reception year is carefully structured to support children in their school readiness for Year 1 whilst carefully nurturing their needs within a safe and stimulating Early Years environment.

### Admissions Policies

Our Playgroup and Preschool are governor-led. In addition, as a Voluntary Aided church school we have our own admissions policy for Reception entry, although parents/carers still need to apply for a place through Dudley Local Authority. Playgroup, Preschool and Reception (main school) admission policies can be found on our website.

Parents wishing to register their child for a place in both Play-group and Pre-school must complete the registration form available from the office (also available on the school website). Pre-school parents are asked to state if they require morning or afternoon sessions. Parents are then issued a receipt explaining the next stage of the admission process and confirming receipt of their application. Children are then placed on file.

A place in our Pre-school **does not** mean pupils have an automatic place in our Reception. Parents/carers must apply through Dudley local authority for a place and the admissions criteria is outlined in the main school admissions policy available on our website.

### Home Visits

Before admission the Pre-school practitioners contacts parents to arrange a home visit as the child's third birthday approaches. Usually the Pre-school lead member of staff and another practitioner will go on the home visit unless the child is known to have Special Educational needs, where upon the SENCO will accompany the Pre-school teacher. This provides an opportunity for staff to meet and talk with parent and child in the comfort of the home environment. The staff will take the home visit pack with relevant forms that need to be completed and a parent friendly pack about Foundation Stage.

### Setting Visits

Once Reception places are accepted by parents and carers, the St James's reception teachers will make contact with any pre-school/ nursery settings that pupils currently attend. If settings and parents/carers consent teachers will then visit the settings, observe the pupil due to start at St James's CE Primary School and speak to their current key worker. If a child does not attend a pre-school setting then a home visit will be arranged.

### Stay and Play

In Playgroup, Preschool and Reception, after the home/setting visit, parents are invited to visit the school with their child for a stay and play session. At this session a member of staff gives a brief talk about the general daily routine and parents can see the Early Years Foundation Stage in action.

### On-line Safety.

In Foundation Stage we teach children how to be safe with technology. Children have access to iPads, class-based computers and interactive whiteboards during child-initiated learning and during group focus sessions. Children are monitored throughout while they use these devices to ensure they are used safely and children are safe. School computers are protected by the school firewall to ensure only appropriate content is available. Staff will teach children how to be safe using the internet and social networking sites, which, even at a young age, children may be exposed to through new devices and technologies.

All EYFS staff, for assessment purposes, have class-based cameras and iPads which are used on a daily basis. These are kept on site at all times, the only exception being Educational visits. Once images have updated the child's learning journey through Tapestry, the pictures are deleted.

Under no circumstances will a member of staff take a class-based camera or iPad off site for any purpose other than educational visits.

In Foundation Stage we are committed to parent partnership and making close relations with our parents and carers. As such we host various sessions for adults through the year. Assembly sessions are held at various times and parents/carers are invited to 'Stay and Play' sessions each full term. As a school we realise handheld cameras are becoming increasingly available through new technologies. Prior to giving parents/carers access to classrooms they are informed not to

take any pictures. In assemblies they are advised to wait until the end of the session and then they make take a picture of their own child away from the mass group.

### Key Workers

Once the child has settled into school we will assign a member of staff to be their "Key Worker".

The key worker will form a good and trusting relationship with both the child and their parents, they will be responsible of collecting evidence and meet and inform the class teacher of the assessment and attainment of the child. It is also the key worker role to liaise with the parents about progress and any concerns they have within the setting. Parents can also consult the class teacher also of their child's progress and maintain a positive and relaxed relationship with the parents.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

### A Unique Child

At St James's C.E Primary School, we recognise that every child is a competent learner. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates.

### Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at St James's C.E Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities or financial status. All children and their families are valued within our school. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We ensure that we implement effective strategies to promote children's social, physical and economic well-being regardless of individual backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping

- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
  - Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary
- A highly committed staffing team whom have a sound knowledge and understanding of the current EYFS welfare requirements and guidance
- Working with feeder providers and other agencies to meet the needs of every individual child

(Also see SEN policy)

But is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children and ensure that good arrangements exist to ensure children's health and safety through robust and regularly reviewed risk assessments for the physical environment and activities within the unit.

### Welfare

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

At St James's C.E Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We are committed to:

- The welfare of children
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so (including the consistent and rigorous application of robust vetting and barring requirements/ Enhanced CRB checks for all adults in the unit and whole school setting)
- Ensure that there are effective early identification procedures for children whom are at risk and that arrangements are in place to keep children engaged
- Ensure that the premises are well-resourced and that the furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure our risk assessment procedures are part of a continuous process to prevent any dangerous incident taking place
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs
- Ensure that the environment is supportive and creates a sense of security thus enabling all children to thrive
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children

## Use of Mobile Phones/devices

- Personal mobile phones cannot be used when in the presence of children either on the school premises or when on outings.
- Mobile phones must be stored securely within the setting during contact time with the children. (This includes staff, visitors, parents, volunteers and students).
- No parent is permitted to use their mobile phone or use its camera facility whilst inside school buildings. School policy regarding this matter must be clearly explained to parents.
- Mobile phones must not be used in any teaching area within the setting or in the bathroom area.
- In case of personal emergency, staff should use the school telephone. It is the responsibility of all staff to make families aware of school telephone numbers.
- Personal calls may be made in non-contact time but not within the teaching areas.
- Personal mobiles, cameras or video recorders should never be used to record classroom activities. ONLY school equipment should be used.
- Photographs and recordings can only be transferred to and stored on a school computer before printing.
- All telephone contact with Parents/Carers must be made on the school telephone
- During group outings nominated staff will have access to the school mobile which can be used in an emergency or for contact purposes.
- In the case of school productions, Parents/Carers are permitted to take photographs of their own child in accordance with school protocols which strongly advise against the publication of any such photographs on Social networking sites.
- It is the responsibility of everyone to adhere to this policy.

## Positive Relationships

At St James's C.E Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

## Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children and in helping them to succeed. We do this through:

- Home visits
- Stay and play sessions
- Key workers assigned to children to inform parents of children's progress
- Use of Tapestry to provide parents with up to date access to their child's learning journey.
- Termly parent's evenings in Reception or via phone for Playgroup and Preschool
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts full time school.
- Ensuring parents receive a written end of year report on their child's attainment and progress

- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns and the Foundation Stage Leader if their concerns are not met with satisfaction. We have an open door policy
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Workshops, Sports day, Stay and Play etc.

#### Parent workshops / Family Learning opportunities.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

#### Enabling Environments

At St James's C.E Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

#### Observation, Assessment and Planning

The EYFS planning is based on child interests, festivals, events, stories, the natural world and celebrations. The medium-term plans focus on the developmental levels of the children in relation to the EYFS curriculum. Medium term planning highlights the part of the curriculum to be taught that week. As staff move through the academic year they are able to see which objectives still need to be taught so giving the children a balanced and thorough access to the curriculum. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for short term planning, however the teacher may alter these medium-term plans in response to the needs, achievements and interests of the children.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of:

- 1) Individual child observations (Focus is on one child during child-initiated learning)
- 2) Individual child observations during whole class teaching.
- 3) Anecdotal observations (For incidental or 'WOW' moments)
- 4) Photographic evidence to support individual child observations.
- 5) Termly summative assessments in relation to the EYFS curriculum and progress within and between the developmental stages for each child (Pupil Progress Meetings) and areas for development within the EYFS curriculum.
- 6) During focus group sessions, children will use a range of AfL strategies to self-assess their own work and judge their overall performance within that session.

At St James's C.E Primary School, we highlight statements on the curriculum to record progress of individual children. This is not a tick list, but rather a best fit based on evidence collected in children's profiles and knowledge that staff have about that child. A best fit of whether children are Emerging or Expected in different age bands and areas of learning are recorded onto tracking formats and analysed at pupil progress meetings.

When a child is aged between 2 and 3, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress

check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

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
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

### The Learning Environment

The EYFS unit indoor and outdoor areas are organised to allow children to explore and learn in a safe and secure environment. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The indoor area has a separate base for Play-Group, Pre-school and Reception which are set up to reflect the seven areas of learning, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The outdoor area is set up to reflect this also.

Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It allows the children to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all seven areas of learning. At St James's C.E Primary School, the outdoor classroom is viewed as being an essential element in all children's development.

### Learning and Development

At St James's C.E Primary School, we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter-connected. We ensure that we foster a challenging curriculum that allows children to learn independently, promotes curiosity, ignites our children's imagination and encourages sustained concentration.

### Teaching and Learning Style

Our approach to teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These are laid out in the whole school Teaching and Learning Policy and Guidelines.

The importance of children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development." Through play opportunities, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the



opportunity and are encouraged to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

### Active Learning

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods." Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested; we endeavour to support this through our curriculum. We understand that children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As they develop we know that their confidence they learn to make decisions increases. Active learning provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

### Creativity and Critical Thinking

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

We ensure that our children are given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

### Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning, which is reflected in our curriculum planning:

- 1) Communication and Language
- 2) Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- 3) Physical Development
- 4) Literacy
- 5) Mathematics
- 6) Understanding the world
- 7) Expressive arts and design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. We ensure that they are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities.

### Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of all EYFS practitioners to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The Foundation Stage Leader (who is also a member of the Leadership Team) develops a strategic action plan annually for the team to develop and improve the existing provision

Regular team meetings provide a forum for action planning, internal review and leading school improvement.

Play-group/ Pre-school and Reception meet separately as year groups on a weekly basis to discuss planning ideas for the following week. All staff are invited to these meetings including

Teachers, HLTAs, general support staff and support staff that give one to one care and support. This allows a wide range of discussion, ideas and expertise to be inputted into the plans.

In addition, the Head Teacher and SLT will carry out monitoring and evaluation of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. This provides effective termly quality checks that lead to actions and facilitate ongoing improvements to the school EYFS provision.