



# St Peter and St Paul's Church of England Primary School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

# EYFS Policy

## Introduction

Rooted and grounded in the love of God, St. Peter's & St. Paul's Church of England Primary School is a vibrant, inclusive community, where every person is empowered to reach their full potential. Guided by our Christian values and the teachings of Jesus, together, we aim to grow into good citizens of heaven and earth. We strive to cultivate a nurturing environment that inspires everyone to develop a lifelong love of learning, grow in character, and make a positive impact on the world around us, working together to be a good neighbour to all.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St Peter and St Paul's Church of England Primary School, children join the Reception class in the September of the year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to "ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe." We aim to support children in their learning through teaching and learning that "ensures children have the knowledge and skills they need to start school and gives children the right foundation for good future progress through school and life." (Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2026)

## Our Intent and rationale for teaching in EYFS

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- The Unique Child: We recognise that every child is unique, constantly learning, and capable of resilience, capability, and self-assurance. Our teaching is tailored to value their individual interests and diverse backgrounds.
- A Secure Foundation: We intend to deliver a high-quality, play-based curriculum across the seven areas of learning. This gives children the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.
- Essential Knowledge and Skills: Our deliberate, responsive teaching ensures children have the specific knowledge and skills they need to start school confidently.
- Healthy, Safe, and Stimulating Environments: We provide a secure, nurturing environment that prioritises welfare and safety—including robust, updated practices for safe eating, safer sleep, and balanced screen exposure.
- Characteristics of Effective Learning: Our rationale is rooted in *how* children learn. We intentionally design experiences that promote playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically.
- Partnership with Parents: We work closely with parents and carers to build a cohesive learning community, ensuring a smooth and supportive transition into formal schooling.

Our Implementation of Overarching Principles in the EYFS setting;

## A Unique Child

At St Peter and St Paul's we recognise that every child is a competent learner and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.

#### Our Implementation:

**Inclusive and Flexible Planning:** We do not track children against rigid, pre-determined checklists. Instead, practitioners look at the individual child, adapting activities around their personal fascinations, background, and cultural identity.

**Adaptive Practice:** We actively monitor and adjust our teaching style to match each child's unique developmental pace, focusing heavily on identifying and supporting any early or emerging special educational needs (SEN).

**Positive Health and Wellbeing:** We embed the updated welfare guidelines directly into our routine. This includes strictly managed safer sleeping spaces, highly documented safer eating and allergy procedures, and active, non-screen-dominated play to promote long-term physical wellbeing.

**Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)** - All children and their families are valued at St Peter and St Paul's C of E Primary School. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of *differences*. All children at our school are treated fairly, regardless of gender, race, religion or ability. In our school we believe that all our children matter and we give them every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children.

We ensure that provision is appropriate to the needs of each child and where appropriate, support is provided. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school's SENCO is consulted for advice about next steps.

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.

#### **Welfare**

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the people caring for them." We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2026.

We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding 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.
  - Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
  - Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

### **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.

We do this through:

- inviting parents and their children to visit school before they start
- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transition sessions;
- supporting children through the transition from pre-school to Reception with the children attending half days for part of the first week.
- informal chats with parents/carers who visit the classroom on 'Family Fridays'
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- formal meetings for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher.
- progress reports on their child's attainment each term and a formal summary of their child's progress with the EYFS Profile and their Characteristics of Learning at the end of the year.
- informal reports that have been recorded on the 2Simple 'Evidence Me' app and are updated weekly for parents and parents have the opportunity to add their own observations of development.
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents; celebration assemblies, school visits, Christmas plays, Sports Day etc
- acknowledgement that parents can arrange to meet with key workers as needed.
- ensuring all parents know that their child's teacher and teaching assistant are their key workers and by providing a quiet and confidential area where parents can discuss any concerns.

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. At our school, Key Worker groups are allocated between the adults who work predominantly with the children. We also have good links with St Peter and St Paul's Parish Pre-School and other providers in Rishton who share information about the children before they start school and who often pop in and visit during the year.

### **Enabling Environments**

Indoor and outdoor at St Peter and St Pauls we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We begin by talking to parents, observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning. We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The

classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or sit quietly and rest. The classroom is set up to enable children to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area, and this has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children that help them develop in all areas of Learning.

### **Learning and Development**

Teachers and teaching assistants provide the curriculum in the reception class. There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas." The prime areas are - Communication and language - Physical development - Personal, social and emotional development. The specific areas are - Literacy - Mathematics - Understanding of the world and - Expressive arts and design Religious Education is also taught in the reception classes and we follow the Blackburn Diocesan Syllabus.

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the SENCO. "Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part of 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.

There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by practitioners. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by practitioners, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for the reception year." (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2026)

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. 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; and
- creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2026)

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational

needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

### **Health and Safety**

We have clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, an annual risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS (see EYFS risk assessment) and in safeguarding and child protection policies there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children.

#### **Safer Eating, School Meals, and Choking Prevention**

- Active Lunchtime Supervision: Children are actively supervised while eating school dinners, packed lunches, or snacks. Lunchtime supervisors and teaching assistants are trained to recognise and immediately handle choking emergencies.
- Strict Food Preparation Standards: High-risk foods provided during fruit snack times, breakfast clubs, or cooking activities are chopped safely.
- Banned High-Risk Foods: Whole nuts, seeds, and high-salt sausages are not given to children under five.
- Allergy and Dietary Tracking: A visible, dynamically updated allergy log is maintained in the classroom and shared directly with the school kitchen, ensuring no cross-contamination or accidental exposure occurs.

#### **Digital Safety and Screen Use Governance**

- Intentional Digital Activity: The 2026 framework mandates that schools "have regard" to digital media guidance. In Reception, the interactive whiteboards or tablets are only used for active, educational purposes (such as phonics or maths games) and do not displace outdoor play, physical development, or back-and-forth communication.
- Device Restrictions: The school's personal mobile phone and smartwatch policy is strictly adhered to by all teachers, teaching assistants, and volunteers within the Reception classroom to protect children's privacy.

#### **Ratios, Staffing, and Paediatric First Aid (PFA)**

- School Statutory Ratios: In the Reception class, the statutory ratio is at least 1:30, and is led by a schoolteacher with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or equivalent early years qualification.
- Paediatric First Aid Presence: All teachers in EYFS are full Paediatric First Aid (PFA) always trained and certified in school and during school trips when Reception children are present.
- Same-Day Incident Reporting: Parents are notified on the exact same day if their child suffers an injury or receives first aid in school, face to face conversation or phone call and a 'Red Injury Letter'.

#### **Safe Recruitment and Absence Tracking**

- Vetting Volunteers: In line with strengthened 2026 safer recruitment guidelines, enhanced criminal records (DBS) checks are mandatory for all parent volunteers or regular classroom helpers. New employees are legally barred from starting work until their checks have completely cleared.
- Unexplained Absence Escalation: We systematically log and track morning absences. Any unexplained non-attendance are followed up immediately by the school office on the same morning, treating it as a key early indicator of a potential safeguarding issue.

### **Indoor and Outdoor Premises Safety**

- Zero Tolerance for Banned Dog Breeds: Registered childcare and school activities are strictly prohibited anywhere a banned dog breed under the *Dangerous Dogs Act 1991* (such as the XL Bully) is kept or present.
- Free-Flow Risk Assessments: Because Reception classes utilise indoor and outdoor "free-flow" spaces, staff conduct daily risk assessments to ensure boundary gates are locked, resources are structurally sound, and water play trays are emptied immediately after use to prevent drowning risks.
- Intimate Care and Toileting: Clear health, safety, and hygiene policies cover intimate care (toileting accidents), ensuring that a child's privacy, dignity, and safety are maintained by familiar school staff.

### **Safeguarding policies and procedures:**

- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy
- A safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use.

### **Transition - Pre-school /NurserySettings**

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition

- Parents are invited to visit school and receive an induction pack providing all relevant information before their child starts school. We encourage parents to complete an 'All About Me' booklet to help with initial assessment and name tracing at home.
- The children are invited on visits to their reception class. One of these visits is without parents to enable the child to explore the classroom independently and for staff to get to know them.
- Members of staff from school make visits to feeder settings or where this is not possible contact is made by telephone to speak to children's key workers. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required to support the child's transition.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support or are part of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process.

### **From Reception Class to Key Stage 1**

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded St Peter and St Paul's Church of England Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 8 picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes ongoing observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating the Impact of EYFS**

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals.

At the end of the year, Reception children are assessed as "Expected" (meeting the goal) or "Emerging" (working towards the goal) across 17 different learning targets.

Year 1 teachers are given the information during transition discussion with the Reception class teacher and for any children who are still at the 'emerging' stage of development, the Year 1 teacher will still work from the Early Learning Goals during the Autumn Term in Year 1.

In our school children usually find transition a seamless experience as they are used to seeing the Year 1 staff daily and take part in joint activities with KS1 throughout the year. We do however take the children into the Year 1 classroom to spend time in there before the end of the Summer term so that they are fully prepared.

EYFS still have regular contact with the children and ensure that they are there to see them into their new class on the first day back in the Autumn Term.

**Related Policies:**

Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest version) and Working Together to Safeguard Children

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

SEND Policy

Allergen Policy

Intimate Care Policy

Curriculum Policies

**Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher and teaching assistants to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS and there is regular contact to discuss practice and action plans. The Headteacher monitors the EYFS as part of whole school monitoring. Monitoring of the Foundation Stage Profile takes place each year with the support of Lancashire County Council Moderators

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