



St John's
Church of England
Academy

Part of the



**Durham &
Newcastle
Diocesan
Learning
Trust**

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Aims

At St John's CE Academy, we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life to achieve their full potential. A child's experience in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has a major impact on their future life.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That 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.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents/carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2021 statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#).

Structure of the EYFS

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year.

At St John's CE Academy, the EYFS accommodates children from the age of 2 to 5 years old. We have a purpose built 2-year-old Nursery, a 3-year-old Nursery room and a Reception class. We offer 15 hours in both Nursery classes and for those who are eligible, we offer 30 hours per week for our 3 year olds. Morning sessions begin at 8.45am and end at 11.45am. Afternoon sessions run from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. For those attending 30 hours per week, the sessions begin at 8.45am and end at 3.30pm.

Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, three areas known as the Prime Areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity, 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

We deliver learning for all of the seven areas through purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led (child working with adult) and child initiated (child chosen) activities. Opportunities for children to develop awe and wonder are provided through school visits and first hand experiences. The children have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own.

Planning and Teaching

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 Prime Areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. The Characteristics of Effective Learning 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 this.

Assessment

At St John's CE Academy, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests

and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

When a child is aged between 2 and 3, practitioners 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.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the seventeen Early Learning Goals, indicating whether they are meeting the expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching the expected level ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents/carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

Working with parents

We believe that children learn and develop best when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.

We recognize that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

Before starting at our setting:

- Meeting both the parents and their child during a home visit (2 Year old and 3 Year old Nursery).
- Offering both the parents and their child the opportunity to spend time in Nursery before their start date at 'Stay and Play' sessions.
- Opportunities for parents, whose child has attended another Nursery setting, to visit the Reception class and to meet and talk to staff.
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Providing a transition morning for all those children starting Reception.

During the EYFS:

- Meeting and greeting children on a daily basis with parents is another informal opportunity to share information about children although we have an open door policy and parents are welcome to make appointments to discuss progress or concerns at any time.
- Developing a range of activities throughout the year that encourage a partnership between child, school and parents: weekly library sessions, Rhyme Time, celebration assemblies, phonics/handwriting meetings, Family Learning, Reception games club, visits.
- Regularly sharing the children's learning through weekly diaries.

- Offering three parent/teacher consultation meetings per year with Reception parents to discuss their child's progress. At the final meeting, parents are informed if their child has achieved the expected level in each Early Learning Goal and they receive a copy of their child's school report.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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 follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the [2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#) (EYFS). All staff within the EYFS are aware of, and follow, the school policies for Child Protection and Safeguarding. Members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom. All mobile phones are switched off and locked away when the children are in the setting. Members of staff, however, do use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation and assessment of children's learning. These photographs are used in Learning Journeys, in class displays and on the school website.

In addition to the school's risk assessments, a daily risk assessment is completed in each room to ensure that any hazards are identified and managed before the children enter the classroom.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The EYFS Lead monitors planning, classroom organisation and practice to ensure there is consistency and that policy is being implemented. Planning is constantly reviewed to incorporate new ideas and thinking to improve the quality of learning. The EYFS team have regular in house meetings to moderate and review progress as well as meeting with the local cluster of schools. There is a designated Early Years governor who liaises, supports and monitors the provision.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according the EYFS statutory framework.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy