

**THE SAINTS  
FEDERATION**



**Grow together**

---

## Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Approved by:	Governing Board
Last reviewed in:	Spring 2026
Next review due by:	Spring 2027

## **1. Aims**

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a secure foundation for learning, development and 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
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

## **2. Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#), (last updated 1st September 2025).

## **3. Early Years**

We believe in nurturing happy and confident children who come to school every day excited to learn, play and explore! We recognise the vital part that the Early Years plays in inspiring awe and wonder of the world, developing friendships, resilience and appreciation of others as well as igniting a love of learning. We know how important the Reception year is, in providing the foundations that enable children to achieve and become successful in life. We welcome children and families into our Saints' federation community with a priority placed upon building relationships that are centred around our children and our core values. We strive to develop and care for our youngest children by responding to their individual needs and interests to ensure all children make progress and thrive.

### **3.1 Our Aims**

- To build upon the varying experience children have had at home and pre-school settings
- To lay firm foundations for the next stage of learning for each unique child; responding to their individual needs
- To nurture positive relationships that enable children to feel secure and become confident and independent
- To encourage children to take risks and challenge themselves in their learning
- To provide stimulating and enabling learning environments that have open ended opportunities and allow children to follow their own interests through play
- To foster strong and supportive partnerships with parents

### 3.2 Overarching Principles

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time
- Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates

#### A Unique Child

We celebrate the uniqueness of each child by observing and noting what they are interested in. We follow individual interests and weave them into our topic-based learning. We understand the pedagogy around children's development, growth and learning and therefore recognise that children learn at varying rates and in different ways and styles. We support each child's learning journey by combining topic-based learning alongside their personal interests.

#### Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. We recognise the importance of parental partnership in their children's learning. We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child.

#### Enabling Environments

We understand that an environment, indoor or outdoor, should be well-organised, well resourced, stimulating and relevant to all children's cultures and communities. The environment plays a vital role in the children's development. We observe the children and their interests and use this to plan next steps in the children's learning and use 'in the moment' planning.

#### Learning and Development

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways. We value all areas of learning and ensure that our planning and teaching recognises this. We want the children to feel secure and to achieve, and, by understanding the different needs and interests of the children, we plan opportunities that are playful and challenging.

Our curriculum helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals as we enable children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities. Learning is supported through indoor and outdoor areas and focusses on the children's interests. We identify progress and next steps through observations and in our planning.

### **3.3 Structure of the EYFS**

St. Andrew's is a two-form entry primary school. We have two Reception classes, offering a total of 60 places.

## **4. Curriculum**

Our early years setting follows the EYFS Learning and Development requirements as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that we must teach. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important 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

We also support the children in 4 specific areas which help strengthen and develop the 3 prime areas, and ignite the children's curiosity and enthusiasm:

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

### **4.1 Planning**

Our staff are ambitious for all children, and plan activities and experiences for the children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff 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 development of each child in their care, and consider whether the child needs any additional support. They use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability (SEND), staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding the children's activities, staff reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and take these into account.

## 4.2 Teaching

Staff make sure that the children experience the three key characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- 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'

Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As the children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more focus on teaching essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning, to help the children prepare for Key Stage 1.

We have a core text approach, where each topic is linked to recommended books for Reception aged children. Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences where they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

We have a yearly plan for trips and enhancement activities. These form an important part of our curriculum. We make good use of our local area and utilise public transport for off site visits e.g. a bus ride to the garden centre for our topic about planting and growing.

### Direct teaching

During the day, the children will take part in adult led activities. These will take the form of daily phonics and daily maths carpet sessions and weekly focus group activities. Our teacher led sessions are carefully planned and tailored for the children in the class using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. These sessions are continuously adapted in order to ensure that they are relevant and challenging for every child.

We value the importance of developing early reading and early maths skills. We teach reading through the systematic and synthetic phonics programme Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

Our children's mathematical ideas are explored through stories and focused around a child's contextual understanding and real-life experiences. We use the ArkCurriculum+ Mathematics Mastery scheme to support our teaching and learning and the key skills of counting, subitising, composition, ordering and comparing are threaded throughout the curriculum, which provides a consistent approach alongside the rest of the school. The teaching of maths is delivered through whole class and group sessions, carefully planned continuous and enhanced provision, and adult led focus activities.

## Role of the Adult

We place a high emphasis on providing a language rich environment and value the importance the role the adult has in providing this. The quality interactions adults have with children throughout the day, developing back and forth conversations and echoing back what children say with new vocabulary, are vital. Adults support children in making connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions to move their learning on. We know that this ‘in the moment’ teaching builds children’s language effectively and supports progress for all.

## **4.3 Transitions**

We recognise children can be vulnerable at time of change particularly those with additional needs e.g. those with a Special Educational Need (SEN) or a child in care. It is important that all children are prepared for change to enable them to feel secure and settle more easily. The emotions that come with change are successfully navigated by children when their routines and are clear and welcoming. We prepare children and support parents in a range of way such as;

- Inviting parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Talk with nurseries, pre-school settings and childminders. In some cases, we visit these settings to see children playing in a familiar setting and speak to EYFS practitioners about their learning and development.
- Arrange ‘stay and play’ taster sessions to enable children to become more familiar with the school setting.
- Arrange home/school visits for children new to Reception, to enable children to meet staff in a comfortable environment and for staff to share information about child in a secure way.
- Arrange a SEN transition meeting with Inclusion lead, EYFS lead, parents and all relevant professional involved with the child.
- Start of the school year in Reception is staggered so that the process of change takes place over time.

Before moving into Year 1, Reception children will take part in series of transition sessions with their new teachers in the summer term. They will be prepared for changes to their routines such as playtimes and where they play as well having opportunity to get to know their new teacher and classroom.

In the final term teachers attend a hand over meeting. Each teacher shares important information about the children with their new class teacher. Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teachers to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

## 5. Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their progress, development and interests. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and keep them up to date with the child's progress and development. Staff will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA).

In the final term of the academic year in which the child reaches age 5, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child (before 30 June in that term). Each child is assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

We share the EYFS profile with the child's year 1 teacher. This helps to inform a discussion between reception and year 1 teachers about the child's stage of development and learning needs and helps with planning activities in year 1.

The school shares the results of the EYFS profile (but not the reception baseline assessment) with their parents and/or carers.

In exceptional circumstances, after discussion and only in agreement with parents and/or carers, a child might stay in EYFS provision beyond the end of the academic year in which they turn 5. In these exceptional cases, we will continue to assess the child throughout their time in EYFS provision and complete their profile at the end of the year before they move into year 1.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. We submit EYFS profile data to the local authority on request.

### Reporting to Parents

Progress is shared at Autumn and Spring term meetings and in the end of year written report.

### Tapestry

We use the online learning journal system Tapestry; each journal will contain a range of observations:

- Observations - Detailing adult role and pupil voice. This may include 'wow' moments capturing new independent learning.
- Focus activities - These are group activities that will include a short context of the activity.
- Whole class experiences - These will give parents information about experiences such as outings, workshops or class visitors.
- Parent contributions - Parent partnership is very important to us. Parent contributions might include observations and photographs of learning and/or interests at home, comments on observations made by our practitioners, responses to home learning activities.
- Home learning suggestions - suggestions to support parents continuing learning at home

## **6. Working with parents and carers**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's a strong partnership between our staff and each child's parents and/or carers.

We keep parents and/or carers up to date with their child's progress and development. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to make sure 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.

We ask parents/carers to provide more than two emergency contact numbers for their child (where possible).

## **7. Inclusion**

We value all our children as individuals at St Andrew's, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

## **8. Staff**

**8.1 Supervision** In accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2025, staff supervision is a requirement for providers under Section 3 – The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements, Clauses 3.34 and 3.35, as follows:

*3.34 Providers must put appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families. Effective supervision provides support, coaching, and training for the practitioner and promotes the interests of children. Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork, and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.*

3.35 Supervision should provide opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being, including child protection concerns.
- Identify solutions to address issues as they arise.
- Receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.

Supervision is an essential part of the effective working relationship between a member of staff and the Senior Leadership Team. The meetings are a two-way discussion between a member of staff and the EYFS Lead and to be effective each person must take equal responsibility for ensuring effective communication and recognition of the value of supervision meetings for both parties.

All staff are provided with a regular supervision meeting with the EYFS Lead, at least once every term which is booked in advance at an agreed time - the meeting may sometimes be a group supervision meeting. This is in addition to regular staff appraisal and other opportunities for staff training (ad hoc meetings as and when required).

\*See separate EYFS Supervision policy

## **8.2 Staff training**

We will:

- Train all staff in safeguarding procedures in line with Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance
- Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures
- Renew training every two years, or more often when it's needed to help maintain skills; keep up to date with any changes to our safeguarding procedures; or because of any safeguarding concerns
- Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our child protection and safeguarding policy (available on school website and from the school office).

Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will:

- Provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to all staff
- Attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework
- Liaise as needed with local statutory children's services agencies and our local safeguarding partners

## **8.3 Safer recruitment**

Please see safeguarding policy.

## **8.4 Whistleblowing**

Please see whistleblowing policy.

### **8.4.1 Malicious or vexatious allegations**

Please see complaints policy.

## **9. Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

Please see child protection and safeguarding policy.

## **9.1 Responding to allegations or concerns**

Please see complaints policy.

### **9.1.1 Investigating the concern**

Please see complaints policy.

### **9.1.2 Outcome of the investigation**

Please see complaints policy.

## **9.2 Staffing ratios**

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils.

## **9.3 Paediatric first aid (PFA)**

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

## **9.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)**

We also have a DSL who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children. They are also responsible for:

- Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSPs (local safeguarding partners)
- Providing support, advice and guidance to all other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required
- Attending a safeguarding training course that complies with the criteria set out in annex C of the latest EYFS framework

## **9.5 Absence**

Please see attendance policy.

## **9.6 Welfare including oral health and tooth brushing**

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by for example, talking to the children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things and how moderation is best
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- The importance of mental health and well-being
- The importance of safety internet use

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy.

## **9.7 Safer eating**

While children are eating, there will always be at least 1 member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate (from a course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the latest EYFS framework). All children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating, and seated safely in an appropriate chair in a designated eating space.

Before a child joins our setting, we will get information on their:

- Dietary requirements and preferences
- Food allergies and intolerances
- Health requirements

We will share this information with all staff involved in food preparation and handling. At each mealtime and snack time it will be clear which staff member is responsible for checking that the food meets all the requirements for each child.

We will make sure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis; the differences between allergies and intolerances; and that children can develop allergies at any time.

We will consult with parents/carers to:

- Create allergy action plans for their child – with the help of health professionals, where appropriate
- We will also keep this information up to date and share it with all staff

We will prepare food in a way that:

- Prevents choking
- Meets each child's individual developmental needs
- Is in line with the DfE's [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#)

In the event of a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record details of the incident and make the child's parents/carers aware. We will periodically review the records to identify whether we can change anything in our practice to make eating safer and then take action as appropriate.

## **9.8 Accident or injury**

We keep a first aid kit (which contains appropriate items for children) always accessible.

We keep a written record of accident or injuries and any first aid treatment.

We will inform parents or carers the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, of any:

- Accident or injury sustained by the child
- First aid treatment given

We will notify the relevant authority of any serious accident, illness, or injury to, or death of any child while in our care and inform them of the action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable.

### **9.9 Safety of premises**

We make sure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor space, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children we care for and the activities provided on the premises.

We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including fire safety and hygiene requirements.

### **9.10 Toileting and privacy**

We make sure that there are:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- Suitable and hygienic nappy changing facilities
- An adequate supply of necessary items such as spare clothes
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

During nappy changes and toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs. See intimate care policy.

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

This is not an exhaustive list of policies and only includes policies specific to the EYFS. A full list of our policies can be obtained from the school office. All statutory polices are on our school website.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	Child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	Health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	Health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	Child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent/carer failing to collect a child and for missing children	Child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	Complaints policy
Safer recruitment	Safeguarding policy
Procedure for whistleblowing	Whistleblowing policy
Information on absences	Attendance policy