



## POLICY DOCUMENT

<b>Title:</b>
Early Years
<b>Reference and Source Document:</b>
Early Years Foundation Stage Framework revised July 2025 <a href="#"><u>EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers</u></a> Development Matters revised September 2023 Written and updated by M. Beesley
<b>The key purpose:</b>
Supporting teaching and learning in Early Years (Reception/Pre-School)
<b>Lead Staff Responsibility:</b>
Early Years Leader
<b>Governing Body Responsibility:</b>
Curriculum and Standards Team
<b>Reviewing Cycle and next date:</b>
Every two years. Next date Autumn 2027
<b>Approved by Leadership Team:</b>
November 2025
<b>Approved by Governing Body:</b>
24.11.25

**Contents:**

1. Introduction
2. Vision Statement
3. Policy Agreement Date
4. Whole School Christian Vision and Aims
5. Four Principles of the EYFS
6. Teaching and Learning
7. Areas of Learning
8. Characteristics of Learning
9. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities
10. Health and Safety
11. Home School Links
12. Development and Organisation
  - Enabling Environments
  - Observations, Assessment and Planning
  - Monitoring and Review
13. Date to be Reviewed
14. Appendix 1: List of Statutory Policies and Procedures for the EYFS

**1. Introduction**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year.

At our Pre-School children can attend from the term after their second birthday and until the beginning of the school year in which they are five. We offer visits and settling in days with or without parents.

In our Reception class, we try to visit all new intake children in their Pre-School or home setting. We also offer 'Stay and Play' sessions, visits to the class and an 'Activity Afternoon'. We offer enhanced transition for those children with additional needs.

In September, we have a staggered induction period. Within the first two weeks all children come to school in the morning and are also offered one full day each week. All children then start full time. We do offer a flexible entry for children with additional needs or those that need longer to settle in.

## 2. **Vision statement**

“The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency** in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through planning for the learning and development of each individual child and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

*The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework September 2025.*

## 3. **Agreement date of Policy:**

The policy was developed by the Early Years Leader, reviewed by SLT in Autumn 2025 and approved by the Full Governing Body on 24.11.25

#### 4. **Whole School Christian Vision and Aims:**

##### **Inspire, Nurture and Achieve**

We believe, as Jesus did, that in our happy, purposeful and welcoming **Christian school** and pre-school **all people** are **valued, encouraged and cared for**:

- **Inspire** the school community to think and feel positively about themselves and others.
- **Nurture** each child and adult so that they grow with others in a secure and happy environment; where they enjoy a wealth of opportunity and experience a love of learning.
  - A place where **achievements** are celebrated and expectations are high for all.

This is underpinned through the understanding that in Jesus, **all** are welcome and unique and have a God given purpose and place in the world. Jesus inspires us that **all** people can flourish.

Matthew 19 v14

Jesus said, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”

##### **We aim to:**

**Inspire** a positive approach to life and learning; **Value and nurture** each child as an individual: developing **resilience, independence, and an understanding** of what they bring to the world;

Create a rich, stimulating environment where **achievements** are celebrated and **teamwork and co-operation** are expected;

Promote **high expectations and self-confidence** for each individual;

Ensure each child strives towards **excellence** supporting those who find learning difficult and challenging the most able children;

Develop and foster **motivation for learning and enthusiasm for life**;

Promote a sense of **belonging** and build outstanding **relationships** between school, home, church and the wider community.

Help every person understand their **unique purpose and place in God's world**.

## 5. Four Principles of The EYFS

**The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is based upon four principles:**

- **A unique child** – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- **Positive relationships** – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- **Enabling environments** – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- **Learning and developing** – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

## 6. Teaching and Learning:

### **The Learning Environment**

The EYFS environments at both Pre-School and Reception are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is set up in learning areas, where children can find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Both facilities have their own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore their environment, 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. Both Reception and Pre-School also have access to our on-site forest area and 'The Meadow' area, situated on Green Lane. Green Lane also has their own 'Nature Play' area.

We promote language and vocabulary, as stated in the Statutory EYFS Framework 2025:

"The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations children have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment are crucial."

- By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively.
- Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive.
- Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from the staff, sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate,

children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

## **Learning and Development**

At St Barnabas School and Green Lane Pre-School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and are following an individual, unique learning pathway. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

### **Features of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS means:**

- the partnership between teachers and parents or carers, so that our children feel secure and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- the understanding that the key person/teacher has of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching.
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the observation checkpoints and the Early Learning Goals.
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents.

### **7. Areas of Learning**

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning

#### **Three Prime Areas:**

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development:** Self-Regulation/Managing Self/Building Relationships
- **Communication and Language:** Listening, Attention and Understanding/ Speaking
- **Physical Development:** Gross Motor Skills/ Fine Motor Skills

#### **Four Specific Areas:**

- **Literacy:** Comprehension/ Word Reading/ Writing
- **Maths:** Number/ Numerical Patterns
- **Understanding the World:** Past and Present/ People, Culture and Communities/ The Natural World

- **Expressive Arts and Design:** Creating with Materials/ Being Imaginative and Expressive

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others, although with younger children, or where appropriate, the 'Prime Areas' are prioritized. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. In each area, there are Early Learning Goals (ELG) that define the expectations for children to reach by the end of the EYFS. There are seventeen areas of learning in total.

#### 8. **Characteristics of Learning:**

The characteristics of effective learning are statutory and are referenced in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework. These characteristics are essential for guiding effective teaching and learning practices in early years education.

Planning children's activities using these characteristics will enrich the teaching and learning experiences and allow us to reflect on the different ways that children learn. They encourage children to be guided by their own thinking, make independent choices and respond to new experiences.

We support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

These 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.

#### 9. **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities:**

##### **A Unique Child**

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

##### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of any real or perceived differences. All children within our settings are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In both settings, we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity

to achievetheir best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

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 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 theirlanguage and communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

**10. Health and Safety:**

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rulesand 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.

**Welfare**

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in theStatutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025.

In the EYFS we recognise that:

“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. The safeguarding and welfare requirements are designed to help providers create high quality settings which are welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.”

See *Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025* for full guidance

In the EYFS we also provide:

- Fresh drinking water is always available and milk and healthy snacks are provided mid-morning and mid- afternoon at Pre-School.
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required and any allergens carefully noted and adhered to.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times, and a record of accidents and injuries is kept. All staff are paediatric first aid trained.
- 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.
- There are safeguarding guidelines regarding the use of cameras and video equipment by staff, parent/carers and visitors within the setting.

### **Safeguarding**

- All staff are recruited following safer recruitment procedures and will undergo appropriate induction training.
- Visiting staff and students will sign in, wear appropriate identification and be briefed on the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
- Visitors will sign in and wear appropriate badges and be escorted or supervised at all times.
- Doors and gates will be kept locked during Pre-School/School sessions apart from allowing access for parents when it is supervised by a member of staff.
- All staff will adhere to the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the school's E-Safety Policy.
- Any photographs taken to evidence children's learning will be taken using school devices only and will remain within the school premises. Teachers will only release photographs or names for publication in school documents, the wider media or on the school web page after thoroughly checking records of parental consent.
- Any personal devices capable of taking photographs (such as mobile phones) will not be used within the presence of children, by staff or visitors.
- Where there is any concern over the welfare and safety of a child, staff will immediately follow the procedures set out within the school's Safeguarding Policy. In brief, concerns will be recorded appropriately and passed to the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs S.Hanson, deputy, Mrs S. Cotton or Miss Gowing (Pre-School DSL).
- We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the EYFS.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

### **11. Home / school links:**

#### **Positive Relationships:**

We recognise that children learn to be independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

## **Parents and Carers as Partners**

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents and carers have played, and their future role, in educating children.

We do this through:

- Talking to parents and carers about their child before their child starts in our Pre-School/Reception class.
- Pre-School parents are invited to visit and stay with their child during the settling in period.
- The school staff aims to visit all children in their Pre-School/home setting prior to their starting Reception. They can also attend 'Stay and Play' sessions, additional visits to their classroom and an 'Activity Afternoon'.
- Reception parents are invited to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- An 'open door' policy in both Pre-school and Reception means parents and carers are welcome into the setting to discuss concerns or progress with the key person/teachers.
- Providing formal meetings for parents each term at which the teacher/Key Person and the parent/carer discuss the child's progress, in private.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents: Activity making days, Nativity play, Forest school, Stay and read, Stay and play, Class assemblies, Sports Day etc.
- Giving parents and carers an opportunity to make comments/observations relating to their children's achievements and contribute to their profile.

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

We have good links with all our local Pre-School providers and are active members of our local partnership group and cluster EYFS school groups.

## **12. Development and Organisation:**

### **Enabling Environments:**

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 planning within the EYFS follows half termly themes. These themes are used by the Pre-School Leaders/ EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning; however, the leader/teacher may alter these plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children.

On entry to Reception, we carry out the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) and our own baselines alongside. At Pre-School staff carry out two-Year-old checks or gather baseline information and use observation checkpoints to judge if children are on track or not on track. All children are then given several 'Areas for Development' and these are shared with parent/carers and placed on the child's 'This is Me' chart for the Key Person to work on in the setting. These are regularly updated when achieved.

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 observation, in focused and child-initiated play, and this involves the key person/teacher and other adults as appropriate. Parents are also encouraged to send in information from home to support our judgments.

Each child's level of development is recorded against 17 Areas of Learning derived from the Early Learning Goals (ELG). We record this data regularly throughout the year. Each time the results are analysed looking at whole year group, individual, term of birth, English as an additional language (EAL), Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND) Gender and Pupil Premium/EYPP. This information is used to plan provision for individuals, groups or the whole cohort for the next half term.

Parent/carers are given regular updates on their children strengths and areas for development through Parent/Carer meetings. Within the final term of Pre-School/Reception class, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's. These will be passed on to their school setting to continue.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the Pre-School Leaders/EYFS teachers and Pre-School practitioners to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head teacher and subject leaders will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of whole school monitoring.

### **13. Date to be reviewed:**

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

Statutory policies and relevant guidelines are available on the **school website**, as a paper or electronic copy on request at the school office.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy See Child on Child Abuse Policy
Behaviour Policy	See Behaviour policy See Anti-Bullying policy See guidelines for parents and carers
Procedure for responding to illness	See Health and Safety Policy See First Aid Guidelines See Allergies In School or Pre-School
Administering medicines policy	See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Health and Safety Policy See evacuation guidelines
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy See Health and Safety Policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy See procedures for missing children
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints Procedure
Equality Policy	See Equality Policy
Admissions Policy	See Admissions Policy (Pre-School) See Admissions Policy (School)