

St Paul's Infant School



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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| Member of Staff Responsible | Mrs Aldridge |
| Position | Head of School |
| Dated | November 2024 |
| Date of next review | November 2025 |

1. Aims

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
- 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

This document outlines the philosophy, aims and principles of early years teaching and learning in Foundation Stage at St. Paul's Infant School. The document underpins practice in all areas of provision.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for 2023:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

3. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2023 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and 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

The Prime areas are essential for fostering early learning skills and are promoted heavily through our planning and provision. Successful mastery of these skills supports children to achieve well in Specific areas of Learning.

At St. Paul's we believe all areas are important to ensure the development of the 'whole child'. Throughout the Foundation Stage our long, medium and short-term plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level. Our long-term planning ensures coverage so that all children have opportunities to work towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Across all of these areas we promote the Characteristics of Effective Learning, which underpin all Learning and Development. Children develop their abilities to play and explore, take an active role in their learning and think creatively. We observe and monitor progress with these skills and report children's progress in these characteristics to parents at the end of the year.

4. Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children 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 consider 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.

At St Paul's the planning of the curriculum is sequential. Long term and medium term planning is used as the basis of weekly plans. In child initiated times, staff use a planning grid with the children to support focus and ensure effective challenge and help children structure their learning. This aids and is a structured model for all children to help with their own planning.

Provocations in the environment are carefully planned based on the children's needs, experiences, interests and which build on their previous learning and knowledge.

5. Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff 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, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

5. Assessment

At St Paul's, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. The Development Matters Bands and Early Learning Goals provide the basis for assessment throughout the Foundation Stage. Children are quickly assessed at their entry point to the Foundation Stage to establish a baseline. Progress is monitored and tracked consistently through learning journeys and our school's electronic tracking system.

Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning.

Staff also consider observations shared by parents and/or

carers. These observations are in learning journey files within each classroom.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS report for each child, using evidence from observations, samples of children's work and teachers' professional judgement. 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 report reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers. The judgements are moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

The report will not only detail attainment against the ELGs, but also how the children demonstrate the Characteristics of Effective Learning, and a more personal teacher comment.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The learning journeys help to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Parents are regularly invited to record their children's achievements at home and are encouraged to share home learning on class dojo. Parents are regularly invited into school to celebrate their children's progress and achievements as well as more formal workshops to help parents support their children at home. The school operates an open door policy whereby parents are able to share any concerns, worries or achievements as they arise.

6. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. 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 sizes legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils).

We have at least 8 members of staff with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and at least 1 of them are available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

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

7. Transitions

At St. Paul's Infant School, we recognise that starting school and moving classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents/carers. During the summer term, parents of children starting reception in September are invited to a meeting at school. This meeting aims to provide parents with key information, school expectations, knowledge on our curriculum and assessment, and advice on how they can help their child. Parents are given a pack with a number of curriculum resources to support their child in September. All parents are invited to indicate their preferences for a home visit in September during the course of this meeting. It is our intention that all children will receive a home visit from their new class teacher and teaching assistant during the first week of September. This gives children the security of meeting with their teachers in a safe, familiar environment and gives parents time to ask questions and share knowledge or any concerns they have about their child. The children are also invited into school for taster sessions before starting school.

Children have a two-week settling in period in reception where they attend half day sessions. This ensures that children have the time to become secure and familiar with the new routines before starting school full time.

At St. Paul's we are committed to continuing to develop our relationships with our many feeder nurseries. During the summer term, reception teachers aim to visit as many nurseries as possible. This allows the teachers to observe children in their setting, and discuss important information about children with their key workers and other nursery practitioners. We use this information, alongside transfer records where possible, to help inform teachers about the new intake and allocate children to classes.

Reception and Year 1 teachers are continuing to work together to make the transition from the EYFS to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible. Throughout the reception year, and specifically in terms 5 and 6, planning is adapted and developed to prepare children for the change in curriculum as they transition to KS1.

Year 1 planning will allow for some Child Initiated learning time during the first few weeks in September. This will allow children to settle into their new classes and routines. Year 1 classrooms will also reflect some aspects of the EYFS environment.

In July, reception and Year 1 teachers will meet to share information and to discuss the individual needs of each child in the class. End of year assessments and ELG data will also be shared. This ensures that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to the new school year.

8. Structure and Organisation

At St. Paul's Infant School, we have three reception classes that admit 30 children per class. Each class has its own full-time teacher and teaching assistant, and where necessary, SEN teaching assistants have been employed to support children with an identified SEN. It is the expectation that all adults in the setting are responsible for children's learning and development. All adults have a shared responsibility to make observations of children's learning, and work with children to take them on to their next steps. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together in each class and across the Foundation Stage to share planning, assessment and children's next steps. This ensures we have an effective team who work closely together, and who are able to carefully plan to ensure children's progress.