



St Nicolas and St Mary CE Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – Policy

Reviewed: April 2022, September 2023, June 2025

Next review date: June 2026

Definitions

'EYFS' means Early Years Foundation Stage. At St Nicolas and St Mary's CE Primary School this includes Little Fishes Nursery and the Reception Classes (children aged 2 to 5).

'School' means St Nicolas and St Mary's CE Primary School.

'EYFS Framework' means "Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage" published by the DfE 2020.

'Parents' means parents and/or carers.

'Practitioners/Staff' mean Teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs).

Our Vision and Values

The vision of the school is: Be courageous! In God's faith, hope & love be empowered to be inspirational, inclusive and innovative. This is based on Joshua 1:9 (courage) and 1 Corinthians 13:13 (faith, hope and love).

More information about our vision and values can be found here: www.stnicolasmary.w-sussex.sch.uk

The school is part of the Bishop Otter Academy Trust (BOAT) whose mission statement is 'Wisdom for Life' which is links to James 3:18:

More information about our trust's vision and values can be found here: www.boat.academy

EYFS Vision

In the early years, we envision a learning environment where play is the cornerstone of education. Recognising the innate curiosity and creativity of young children, we believe that learning through play fosters critical cognitive, social, and emotional development. By tapping into each child's interests, we create a dynamic and engaging curriculum that nurtures their natural inclination towards exploration and discovery.

We aim to cultivate a space where children are encouraged to be courageous in their learning journey, embracing challenges and celebrating their achievements. Our innovative curriculum is designed to inspire and motivate, incorporating a blend of child initiated and adult led learning to ensure that every child feels valued and empowered to reach their full potential.

Our commitment to inclusivity means that we honour the diverse backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives of all children, providing equal opportunities for participation and growth. By fostering an environment of respect and empathy, we help children build strong foundational skills that will serve them throughout their lives.

In this nurturing and stimulating setting, children are equipped to become confident, lifelong learners, ready to navigate and contribute positively to the world around them.

Aims of our Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

Courage 🐟 **Faith** 🐟 **Hope** 🐟 **Love**



In Early Years, though effective learning and teaching opportunities we want children to:

- Courage** Be courageous and grow in confidence
Grow in independence and become resilient learner
Explore the world, the creation and all that is around us.
- Faith** Be curious and ask questions
Be creative learners, researching the world around them, following their own fascinations
- Hope** Be positive about today, this week and the future
Feel safe and secure and have a sense of belonging and strong attachments
Have high aspirations, build on their previous best and excel in whatever they choose to do
- Love** Feel valued and heard as an individual
Be able to identify and communicate their own needs and feelings
Respect themselves, each other, their communities and environment
Establish effective and supportive relationships

Introduction

St Nicolas and St Mary's CE Primary School follows the EYFS Framework which sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. As a school we also refer to the Development Matters 2020 which provides an overview of how children develop and learn. It focusses on strengthening language and vocabulary development to particularly support disadvantaged children and strengthening English and Numeracy outcomes to ensure a good grasp on these areas in preparation for year one.

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 learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- **parent partnership** both practitioners and parents working together;
- **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The **learning and development requirements** cover:

- the areas of **learning and development** which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early years settings;
- the **early learning goals** that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five); and
- **assessment arrangements** for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents).

The safeguarding and welfare requirements in the EYFS Framework cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

Overarching Birth to Five EYFS Principles



There are four guiding principles that underpin the EYFS and help to shape practice in Early Years settings. These are:

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents; and
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development in the EYFS; they are all important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the **prime areas**, are:

- Communication and Language;
- Physical development; and
- Personal, Social and Emotional development.

There are also four **specific areas**, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied, which are:

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding the World; and
- Expressive Arts and Design.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) classes at St Nicolas and St Mary's we aim to provide a broad, balanced and creative curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral and cultural development within a safe and secure, stimulating environment.

Staff consider the individual needs, interests, social and cultural backgrounds and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan realistic, challenging and enjoyable experiences for each child in all the areas of learning and development.

Staff working with the youngest children focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. We strongly promote the different ways in which children learn and focus upon the characteristics of learning. The 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; and
- **Creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)



In the final term of the year, in which the child reaches age five, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG's), and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile reflects: ongoing observations; all relevant records held by the school; discussions with parents, and any other adults to whom the teacher or parent judges can offer a useful contribution. A judgment is made at the end of the year on whether a child is meeting the expected level of development in each of the 17 ELG's.

Communication and Language -

- Listening, Attention and Understanding
- Speaking

Physical Development

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- 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

Further information on the EYFS Profile can be found in the EYFS Framework.

Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. These inform a dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of activities in Year 1.

The school reports EYFS Profile results to local authorities and takes part in moderation activities as requested in line with the EYFS Framework.

Progress Check at age two

Between the age of 2 and 3 the Little Fishes Nursery Key People will complete a short-written summary of a child's development in the prime areas. The progress check must identify the child's strengths, and any areas where the child's progress is less than expected. The progress check is to be completed at an agreed time between parents and practitioners.

Play Policy

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as



they learn to explore, thinking about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Here at St Nicolas and St Mary's Church of England School, we believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Free-flow of children is facilitated by them having the opportunity to learn in three adjoining classrooms (two reception classes and the expanded nursery), the shared area and the Early Years outside area. This is also made accessible to the children at all times and in all weathers, unless advised unsafe. Each classroom is set up to offer the children different learning opportunities which they undertake throughout the school day.

By providing a secure environment the children will be able to:

- Practice and build up concepts, ideas and skills
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems
- Be independent, be alongside others and co-operate
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules and boundaries

The adults in the setting support play by:

- Creating a stimulating environment
- Supporting the children through planned activities
- Asking open-ended questions about the children's play
- Extending their communication
- Supporting spontaneous play

Outdoor Play policy

Outdoor play is essential for all aspects of a child's development. It provides children with experiences which enable them to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically. In doing so, it provides a rich context for the development of their language and encourages positive attitudes towards a healthy lifestyle.

The aim of both indoor and outdoor play is to provide a stimulating environment for children's learning in all areas of the EYFS curriculum. Close observation is essential to assess children's ability and to ensure appropriate planning and continuity for the outdoor curriculum. The provision and planning for outdoor play, just as indoor play, must reflect the diversity and richness of the experience and developing interests of the children.

Baseline

The EYFS Statutory Framework refers to the implementation of the baseline assessment carried out during the first six weeks in which a child starts school. Please find further information below taken from the Statutory Guidance:

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) assesses a child in early mathematics, literacy, communication and language. The purpose of the RBA is to form the starting point for cohort-level school progress measures. Data from the RBA is compared to key stage 2 outcomes 7 years later to form the overall progress measure for a school. The RBA and its data should not be used for any other purpose apart from the progress measure. Data collected and produced from the assessment will be stored in the National Pupil Database (NPD). The data, including numerical scores, is not shared with external bodies, including schools, teachers, pupils or parents/carers. The RBA is not suitable as a formative or diagnostic assessment. Scores are not shared or published to prevent any labelling and streaming of children or judgement of early years providers.



Instead, teachers receive a series of narrative statements informing them of how the child performed on the day. There is no expected standard and children cannot pass or fail.

Safeguarding and Welfare

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 school takes the safeguarding and welfare requirements as specified in the EYFS Framework very seriously and will take all necessary steps to ensure that children are kept safe and well and to:

- safeguard children;
- ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children;
- promote good health;
- manage behaviour; and
- maintain records, policies and procedures.

The school has a number of policies that we follow to ensure that the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS are met:

- Child Protection
- First Aid
- Toileting Policy
- Prevent Duty
- Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills Sept 2015
- Tapestry Policy

All policies can be requested from the school office and several key policies are on display opposite the visitor/disabled toilet. Some policies are also available on the school's website.

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:

- For children aged 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 3 children
- For children aged 3 and over:
 - o Where there is a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another approved level 6 qualification, an instructor or another suitably-qualified overseas trained teacher:
 - For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 30 children
 - For all other classes, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
 - o Where a person with the above qualifications is not working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children
 - o For reception classes:
 - We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils
- If we have a mixed age class (or group)
 - o We determine ratios guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of the children within the group

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.

Recording and Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents and practitioners to recognise children's progress,



understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing (formative) assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. In their interactions with children, practitioners respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress, and observations that parents share.

Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. The school has therefore adopted the Tapestry iPad app which practitioners use to record observations and track children's progress. Parents should be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development through observations being sent through electronically on a regular basis. Termly meetings will be held between the key worker and parents to discuss the child's next steps and progress. Practitioners will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and any relevant professionals.

Learning Journals are now electronically produced which allows all the children's observations, examples of work and next steps forward. This ensures an accurate representation of the child's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

In order to ensure all children's development is carefully considered, each child will be a focus child once a week. This is to provide focused time on their next step targets – particularly for math and English.

Key People

Each Child in reception will have the class teacher as their key people, however the wellbeing and welfare of the children is carefully monitored by all staff. Each member of staff is responsible for contributing to the child's developmental needs and will observe the learning that takes place.

Each child in the Nursery is assigned a key person. Parents are informed of the name of the key person, and their role, when a child starts attending the Nursery. The key person helps ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person seeks to engage and support parents in guiding their child's development at home. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

At the school, we observe the children during each session, these observations are then passed on to the child's key person who plans the child's next steps of learning. The Key Person meets with parents once a term to share their child's next steps.

The school recognises that a quality learning experience for children requires a quality workforce and regularly considers the training and development needs of all staff members to ensure they offer a quality learning experience for children that continually improves. Performance Management/Appraisal and other related policies are available on request.