

# Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



*'Growing in faith, hope and love. But of these three the greatest is love'.*

*1 Corinthians 13:13*

Our school will continue to be a happy, welcoming and inclusive Christian environment, where everyone is treated equally and expectations are high.

We will provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment in which every individual is cared for spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally, guided by the values of our Christian faith.

We will combine high standards with a broad, balanced and rich curriculum which encourages creativity and inspires a commitment to lifelong learning.

We will focus our teaching and learning on the needs, abilities and enthusiasms of individuals, providing a tailored approach to supporting all pupils according to their needs.

We will work in partnership with parents, parish and stakeholders to place our school at the heart of the community it serves.

We will build on our strengths and drive our own improvement, set ambitious and challenging targets, whilst facilitating opportunities for everyone to be the best that they can be.

**Love, Trust, Confidence, Hope, Friendship, Forgiveness, Co-operation**

# St Andrew's C of E Primary School

Policy updated – January 2026

To be reviewed – January 2027

## **Rationale and Aims**

This policy outlines the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at St Andrew's C of E Primary School. Throughout this policy, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) refers to children in our Foundation Stage (Reception) class.

At St Andrew's C of E Primary School, we aim to provide every child with a safe and stimulating environment in which they can learn and develop. Each and every child's welfare is considered individually and learning experiences are intended to be challenging and stimulating across the curriculum. We value the individual child and work alongside parents, carers and the wider community in order to meet their needs and to help every child to reach their full potential. We share our learning across many social media platforms so that we can include parents, carers and the wider community in our exciting learning journey.

## **Our Philosophy**

At St Andrew's C of E Primary School, our Early Years Foundation Stage focuses on meeting the unique needs of every child. We aim to create a vibrant, engaging, and challenging learning environment that sparks curiosity and wonder. Fun and laughter are central to our approach, helping to ensure that learning experiences are both meaningful and memorable. Play is at the heart of our curriculum, bridging the gap between children's imagination and the real world. To support this, we offer open-ended, natural resources and thoughtfully designed spaces that encourage children to take the lead in their own learning, allowing the environment itself to act as an inspiring "third teacher."

## **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**

We adhere to the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)) 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.

- The importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. We plan the curriculum around the seven areas of learning for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

### **Curriculum Design**

Our curriculum is designed for children to learn from a mix of focus adult-led tasks, guided provision and child-initiated learning within provision that are weaved throughout the day. Sequenced curriculum objectives are aligned to the Early Learning Goals and we have deliberately repeated key themes and stories throughout the EYFS to ensure children can build on their knowledge and have opportunities to develop and apply skills from the prime areas of learning and development. We have launched "The Write Stuff" in EYFS to align with our whole school approach to guide the Literacy learning. As children move through the Reception class phase, the curriculum is sequenced to prepare them for Year 1.

#### **The Prime Areas:**

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

#### **The Specific Areas:**

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

No area of learning stands alone; each is equally important and connected to the others. We deliver our curriculum through a combination of adult-led guidance and child-initiated exploration. Every child is unique, and we aim to meet their individual needs through a broad and balanced range of experiences. We take every opportunity, in the moment, to guide, encourage, model, and support learning. By doing this thoughtfully, meaningful teaching and high-quality learning naturally happen.

### **Oracy, Phonics and Early Reading**

At St Andrew's C of E Primary School, we love language, and opportunities to develop both the children's speaking and listening skills are embedded within our Early Years Curriculum. From modelling conversations, joining in with songs and rhymes and through exploring language in our carefully chosen core texts, the foundations of all future learning are formed. From EYFS to Year 6, we aim to build a culture and love of reading that permeates every classroom alongside teaching the essential skills of reading. In the EYFS, quality texts stimulate all forms of literacy and all children leave reception with a strong cultural knowledge of well-known fairy tales, nursery rhymes and stories. The journey of a reader in the EYFS is well mapped out. From developing a phonetical awareness, to engaging in conversations about books and characters, to daily phonics instruction, and then developing their own independent reading strategies, children will leave the EYFS being able to

successfully access the next stage of their learning in Year 1 and beyond. As a school, we follow the systematic synthetic phonics programme of Red Rose Letters and Sounds Phonics.

### **Inclusion**

In keeping with our intent of seeing every child as a unique individual with the capacity to thrive and be successful, the EYFS curriculum provides challenge for all children. This is through a range of differentiated approaches but centered on the need for Quality First Teaching. Additional in class support, targeted questioning and interventions are also used. At St Andrew's C of E Primary School, no child shall be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability as detailed in the school Equality Policy. With support from the school SENCO, staff in EYFS will plan for children with special educational needs ensuring that all children have the opportunity to develop to their full potential. If a child with identified SEND enters the Early Years, a meeting will be held and a plan devised to support the child and parents in their transition into school.

### **Staff**

All staff involved in the education of our children will develop good, healthy relationships and provide a secure environment in which children feel able to make mistakes, as well as build confidence and celebrate their successes. The Early Years team work with the school nurse, Speech and Language therapists, SEND support staff, health workers and other family support practitioners to provide a multi-agency network which supports the needs of individual children as and when this is necessary. At times, the Foundation Stage welcomes visiting student teachers and school students who work alongside our staff. We also have volunteer readers who come in to support children's learning. Other professionals may work within the setting throughout the year. All visitors and helpers hold an appropriate DBS certificate, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children.

### **Outdoor Learning Area**

Our Foundation Stage benefits from a thoughtfully designed outdoor learning space, which children can access every day. With all-weather clothing and footwear provided, children can explore freely without any barriers to learning. The outdoor area is a natural extension of the classroom, offering a wide variety of resources to support curiosity, creativity, and skill development. EYFS staff plan engaging activities, while also allowing children the freedom to make their own choices, fostering independence and a love of learning in the fresh air.

### **Snack**

We see snack time as a social event, a time where the children enjoy a drink of milk, piece of fruit together. This time of day is the ideal opportunity to develop and enhance the children's social skills and to encourage interaction and conversation with their peers as they sit together. It also develops independence as the children are encouraged to serve themselves. In line with the updated 2025 guidance, children in EYFS (0-5 years) should be supervised when eating (children must be seated and facing a supervising adult) and food must be chopped into safe sizes (e.g. slices for apples, batons for carrots, etc.) to reduce choking hazards.

## **Assessment, Reporting & Recording**

Assessment is an ongoing part of the Foundation Stage, primarily through formative methods and detailed observations of each child. These observations help inform judgements against the termly St Andrew's Statements across all seven areas of learning. The statements are progressive, using the "Development Matters" guidance, building towards the Early Learning Goals. Termly Pupil Progress Meetings are held with all teachers to celebrate achievements, track progress, and identify areas where additional support may be needed.

In EYFS, an early years tracker is used as a key assessment tool, updated and analysed each term. During their first half-term, children also complete the mandatory Reception Baseline Assessment, carried out by the class teacher. This information helps identify next steps and informs future planning.

### **Reporting**

At St Andrew's C of E Primary School, we share children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals with parents each term in the form of parents' meetings and assertive mentoring reports. The final assessment comes in the form of a detailed end-of-year report written by the class teacher, providing a full picture of each child's knowledge, understanding, and abilities, their attainment against expected standards, and their readiness for Year 1.

### **Recording**

In our Early Years the children record their individual learning journey through:

- Individual Reading Diaries and Sound Books
- Individual Phonics Journals
- Handwriting Folders
- Individual Learning Journeys
- Floor books for Understanding the World, RE and PSHE.

## **Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers**

- Parents and carers are recognised as children's first and most enduring educators.
- Induction meeting allows parents to meet EYFS staff and share information about their child.
- Transition Days provide opportunities for children to become familiar with classrooms and outdoor areas.
- Teddy Bear's Picnic in the Summer Term prior to starting school
- An open-door policy ensures that an adult from each class is available at the start and end of each day for brief discussions.
- Communication is maintained through Tapestry, termly newsletters and use of the class page on our school website
- Parents' Evenings are held twice a year.

- Termly Assertive Mentoring reports and end-of-year reports provide a detailed summary of each child's progress.
- Volunteer readers visit to share stories and support children's love of reading.

### **EYFS Profile**

In the final term of the Reception year (no later than 30th June), an EYFS Profile is completed for each child. This provides a reliable, valid, and accurate assessment of a child's development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The profile assesses each child's outcomes against the 17 Early Learning Goal (ELG) descriptors. Further details can be found in the *Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook 2023* ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)). It also indicates whether a child has achieved a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed by the class teacher using professional knowledge and judgement to make a "best fit" decision. Each area of the EYFS curriculum is graded as:

- **0 = Below ELG** (working below the expected levels)
- **1 = Emerging ELG** (not yet meeting expected levels)
- **2 = Expected ELG** (meeting expected levels of development)

A copy of the EYFS Profile report is shared with Year 1 teachers to facilitate dialogue between Reception and Year 1 staff, supporting the planning of learning for the next academic year.

The profile data is statutory and submitted to the Local Authority, where it is used to benchmark performance and identify areas for school improvement.

### **Safeguarding in the EYFS**

Please read the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy for comprehensive information regarding the safeguarding and protection of all children in our care.

### **Written by L. Lee- EYFS Lead**

*This EYFS Policy has been updated in 2025 to reflect current best practice and new national guidance, including *The Strong Foundations in the Early Years* and *The Best Start in Life: A Research Review for Early Years*. These documents emphasise the importance of early learning, emotional wellbeing, and the role of strong adult-child relationships in supporting children's holistic development. Where relevant, sections of this policy draw directly on principles and recommendations from these publications (for example, references will note 'This has come from The Best Start in Life document').*