

St. Dunstan's RC Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage policy

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Next Review		September 27
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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
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with 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 Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, dated 13 July 2026 and effective from 1 September 2026.

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St Dunstan's RC Primary School children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday. At St Dunstan's, we have a 30 place Nursery provision and a 30 place Reception.

4. Curriculum

Our Early Years curriculum reflects the educational programmes set out in the **EYFS statutory framework** and is rooted in our **Catholic faith**. We believe Religious Education is a life-long journey, and children not only learn about religion but also learn from it, developing spiritually, morally, and culturally. Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest 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

4.1 Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers use the national schemes of work, where appropriate, to support their planning for individual children. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. The planning is based upon themes with discrete phonics, mathematics and reading directed teaching. However, planning, which is based upon a different topic which is identified as a vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement, and interest of the children. Our medium-term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals.

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 Dunstan's RC Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Play-based learning is paramount, and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

4.2 Teaching

Children benefit from meaningful learning across the EYFS curriculum at St. Dunstan's. Through a balance of child-initiated and adult-led learning, children make progress across the seven areas of learning.

The Curriculum is based on the new EYFS Framework. Development Matters supports practitioners in the delivery of the curriculum.

- All pupils are assigned a named key person, who ensures that pupils' learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.
- The curriculum ensures that our pupils develop their learning characteristics, alongside the seven areas of learning to ensure pupils receive the right support and encouragement during the EYFS years to enable them to become creative, and adventurous learners throughout their lives.
- All teaching staff have secure curriculum knowledge and have a deep understanding of how children learn. Support, through continuous professional development, ensures high-quality first teaching is delivered across the provision.
- All teaching staff presents information clearly to children, promoting appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught. All Staff engages in meaningful interactions and conversations with pupils to check children's understanding, identify misconceptions and provide clear explanations to improve their learning. In so doing, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary.
- All teaching staff ensure that their own speaking, listening, and reading of English enables children to hear and develop their own language and vocabulary. They read to children in a way that excites and engages them, introducing new ideas, concepts, and vocabulary.
- Across the EYFS provision, teaching is designed to ensure children have the opportunity to embed their learning so information sticks in their long-term memory. New learning is integrated and progress in learning is made.
- All staff and leaders use assessment well to check what children know and can do to inform teaching. This includes planning suitably challenging activities and responding to specific needs. Leaders understand the limitations of assessment and avoid unnecessary burdens for staff or children.
- All staff create an environment that supports the intent of an ambitious, coherently planned, and sequenced curriculum. The available resources meet the children's needs and promote their focus on learning.

5. Assessment

At St Dunstan's RC Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

During the first term in Reception (within the first 6 weeks) the teacher assesses the ability of each child using Reception Baseline Assessment. This assessment allows us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

Ongoing observations throughout the year inform the progress of each child. Over the year the assessments are monitored through regular moderations with local schools and at the end of the year the final judgements are moderated formally to ensure accuracy of assessment.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. 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 assessment results are sent to the LA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings and in the end-of-year report. The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is 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.

6. Working with parents

Parents and/or carers are kept 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.

A strong and effective partnership is built with parents through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our open days, Teddy Bears' picnic or arranged appointments
- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their childcare provision prior to their starting school
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing Reception at the school
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home/School agreement
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have
- Holding a parent consultation early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if staff have concerns about the progress of a child they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them
- Written contact through a weekly class newsletter, Home/School reading diary and whole school newsletters
- Sharing the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers
- Offering parent/teacher consultation meetings throughout the year at which their child's progress is discussed
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception

- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as a phonics workshop, assemblies, Christmas productions and sports day etc
- Offering a staggered start to school and this can be extended dependent on the needs and development of the child

7. 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 size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

-We have at least 1 person with a current pediatrics 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.

-We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in reception by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- Visiting the dentist
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- We provide healthy snack choice to promote good oral health

From 1 September 2026, the school has regard to the Department for Education's guidance on children's screen use in early years settings. Screen use in Reception is limited, carefully planned, age-appropriate and linked to a clear learning, communication or accessibility purpose. Children do not access screen content without adult oversight, and screens do not replace high-quality interaction, practical play, stories, physical activity or outdoor learning. Appropriate assistive technology for pupils with SEND is considered according to individual need.

The school's safeguarding arrangements set out how mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging or sharing capabilities may be used. Digital content is checked before use; advertising, autoplay, algorithm-driven content and unsuitable artificial intelligence tools are avoided in Reception.

The school follows the safer-recruitment and suitability requirements in the EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff and regular volunteers working directly with Reception children must have the appropriate identity, reference, enhanced DBS and, where eligible, children's barred-list checks before starting. Occasional supervised helpers are managed through the school's risk-assessment and volunteer procedures. Staff and prospective staff must disclose relevant information that may affect their suitability, subject to the legal rules on protected convictions and cautions.

The detailed safer-sleep requirements for children under two are not applicable because the school provides Reception provision only. If a Reception pupil or Nursery pupil needs to rest or

sleep because of a medical condition, disability or other identified need, an individual plan and risk assessment will specify safe supervision and care arrangements.

When Reception pupils or Nursery pupils attend school-run breakfast or after-school care, the safeguarding and welfare requirements in section 3 of the EYFS framework continue to apply. The learning, development and assessment requirements in sections 1 and 2 do not apply to wraparound-only care for children who normally attend Reception or an older class during the school day.

Further safeguarding and welfare procedures, including child protection, allegations against staff, whistleblowing, online safety, safer recruitment and staff conduct, are set out in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and associated procedures.

8. Monitoring arrangements

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head Teacher will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Governing Body will also be part of this process. **This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where statutory requirements change. The next scheduled review is February 2027.**

9. Linked Policies

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy
Children's screen use and use of mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices	See online safety policy, child protection and safeguarding policy and staff code of conduct
Safer recruitment, staff suitability and volunteer checks	See child protection and safeguarding policy, safer-recruitment procedures and single central record

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Banned dog breeds and premises controls	See health and safety, visitor and lettings arrangements
Safeguarding and welfare during school-run wraparound care attended by Reception pupils	See child protection and safeguarding policy and wraparound care procedures