'Let all that you do be done in Love' 1 Corinthians 16:14

The example of Jesus Christ and the Good news that He brings inspire St George's to be a place of hope and a caring and inclusive community in which we all

Love to learn and Learn to Love.

St George's CE Primary and Nursery School

EYFS Policy

Date agreed:	November 2026
Review Date:	November 2027

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

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.' *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*, Department for Education, 2026

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At St George's we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development and building independence and skills for life in partnership with parents and carers.

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the reception year.

1.Vision and Principles

At the heart of our Early Years provision is a simple belief: every child deserves the very best start in life.

Our approach is rooted in the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**, alongside the national ambition set out in **Best Start for Life**, which emphasises the importance of early development, strong relationships and high-quality provision in shaping children's life chances.

We are equally guided by the principles outlined in **Strong Foundations in the First Years of School**, recognising that the Early Years is not a preparation phase alone, but a critical period for securing the knowledge and skills children need for later success.

We therefore:

- hold **high expectations for all children**, regardless of starting point
- prioritise **secure attachment, emotional wellbeing and relationships**
- ensure **no child is left to chance**, with carefully planned experiences
- recognise that **early gaps can widen quickly without precise teaching and support**

Four guiding principles shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- that every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- that 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.
- the importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates.

At St George's we have six additional principles which underpin our beliefs about our children's Early Years experience, and form the basis of our curriculum:

- **Learning to be a learner** – learning the skills we need to be a successful and motivated learner. *Providing opportunities in children's play to enable them to develop characteristics of effective learning.*
- **Developing and exploring new and exciting vocabulary** – learning about words and using them in our play. *Creating an enabling environment which promotes language and talking, in which children can thrive.*
- **Enjoying play and new experiences** – finding things out in our way through curiosity, interest and fun, learning from things that go well, and from the mistakes that we make. *Learning alongside children in their play to encourage curiosity and inquisitiveness*
- **Building on what we know** – using what we know to help us learn new things and decide our next steps of learning. *Identifying individual needs and next steps to challenge and support learning across all seven areas.*
- **Continuing our learning at home** – engaging with parents to encourage home learning opportunities and work in partnership. *Working openly within the team and with parents to build successful partnerships and relationships*
- **Following the child's lead** – to engage in our learning through purposeful play and activities based on our interests and curiosities. *Observing and interacting with children to identify interests to support development*

Staffing and Organisation

The Foundation Stage is made up of 26 part time Nursery Children (ages 3-4 years) and 30 full time Reception children. There is one teacher and 2 teaching assistants working with Nursery children, and one teacher and two teaching assistants working with Reception children.

We meet statutory staffing requirements for EYFS.

- Reception: 1:30 with QTS class teacher. 2 TA's: at least 1 holding approved level 3 qualification

- Nursery QTS teacher alongside approved level 3: 1:13

1:8 where no level 6 and level 3 present.

The Nursery class and Reception work in adjoined classrooms in a building suitable for their needs. Regular planned activities allow Nursery and Reception children to work alongside each other and with both the Nursery and Reception staff members.

The Nursery and Reception classes have a shared secure outdoor area which is accessible from their classroom and is used to support the children's learning.

Every child is assigned a **Key Person** to help ensure their care and learning is tailored to their individual needs. At least one staff member with a current Paediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate are with Nursery and at least one with Reception and accompanies children on all outings at all times.

At St George's we engage in ongoing professional development to improve our teaching skills, knowledge and understanding.

Staff Supervision

In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework, we put appropriate arrangements in place for the regular supervision of all staff who have contact with children and families (including teachers and teaching assistants in both Nursery and Reception). Effective supervision provides support, coaching, and training for practitioners, promotes the interests of children, and fosters a culture of mutual support, teamwork, and continuous improvement. Supervision sessions provide regular, confidential opportunities for staff to discuss any issues—particularly concerning children's development or wellbeing (including child protection concerns)—identify solutions to address challenges, and receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.

2. Aims

In line with the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**, and the ambitions of **Best Start for Life**, we aim to:

- Provide a **high-quality early education** that secures strong foundations in all areas of learning
- Place **communication and language at the centre**, recognising its role as the gateway to learning
- Ensure children develop **foundational knowledge and skills** (including early language, early mathematics and early literacy)

- Promote **self-regulation and executive function**, enabling children to focus, persist and manage their behaviour
- Narrow gaps for disadvantaged children through **early identification and targeted support**
- Build **children's confidence, independence and resilience**, preparing them for future learning

3. Curriculum

Our curriculum is ambitious, carefully sequenced, and designed to reflect the expectations set out in the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.**

It is shaped by the evidence base highlighted in **Best Start for Life** and **Strong Foundations**, ensuring that what children learn is purposeful, progressive and rooted in what matters most.

It is structured around a clear Intent, Implementation and Impact model.

3.1 Intent

Our curriculum intent sets out what we want children to learn, why it matters, and how it prepares them for future success. At St George's, the EYFS curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior learning, provide first hand learning experiences, allow the children to develop interpersonal skills, build resilience and become creative, critical thinkers. Our curriculum embraces the community in which we are situated, recognising local history, heritage, geographical situation and the aspirations of our children. Our curriculum encompasses the four principles of **the unique child**, **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, positive relationships** and **learning and development** and we ensure that each of these principles are in our everyday practice and form the basis of all of our teaching.

We place strong emphasis on the religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children. Our school community has identified a core set of values that underpin everything we do for all of our school family – these core values are Hope, Love, Friendship, Honesty, Compassion, Forgiveness and Thankfulness. Every child is recognised as a unique individual and we celebrate and welcome the differences within our school community.

In line with **Strong Foundations**, we are explicit about the **foundational knowledge and skills** children need to secure early, so that they are not held back later.

Our intent:

- prioritises the **prime areas**, particularly communication and language
- ensures children develop **early vocabulary, number sense, physical control and social understanding**
- reflects children's **starting points**, ensuring equity and ambition
- is **coherently sequenced**, so learning builds over time
- ensures all children have access to **rich experiences and meaningful interactions**

We are clear about what children need to **know, remember and be able to do**, ensuring progression is planned and secured.

3.2 Areas of Learning

We deliver all seven areas of learning, with a deliberate emphasis on the prime areas, as identified in the **Statutory Framework**.

This reflects the **Best Start for Life** priority that early communication, physical development and emotional security are fundamental to long-term success.

The seven areas of learning shape what we do in the Early Years, each of which is important and all are inter-connected. The three Prime Areas are Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development – all three are crucial to build children's capacity to learn, form relationships and ignite enthusiasm for learning enabling them to thrive. The four Specific Areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied, are Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

3.3 Characteristics of Effective Learning

In line with the **Statutory Framework**, we recognise that how children learn is as important as what they learn.

The EYFS curriculum is designed to develop the characteristics of effective learning:

- **Creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
- **Active learning** – children keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
- **Playing and exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

Adults support these through carefully planned provision and responsive interactions.

We use a Growth Mindset approach alongside Building Learning Powers to encourage and develop these characteristics of effective learning, which reflect the values and skills needed to promote responsibility for learning and future success, enabling children to move through school with a sense of belonging, where they have the confidence and skills to make decisions, make connections, reflect, evaluate and become life-long learners.

Community involvement is an important part of our curriculum and we embrace the opportunities that are available to us – celebrating, exploring and learning from our local area and the family and friends within it.

3.4 Implementation

Our curriculum is implemented through a balance of:

- **explicit teaching of key knowledge and skills**
- **high-quality continuous provision**
- **purposeful, well-supported play**

In line with **Strong Foundations**, adults play an active role in:

- modelling language and thinking

- breaking learning into manageable steps
- ensuring children **practise and embed learning**
- using assessment to adapt teaching in the moment

The St George's EYFS Curriculum is designed to engage all children and ensure that they all make good progress from their starting points. A number of key resources are used to support the development of the curriculum including children's interests and needs, Development Matters, RWI and First for Maths.

Child initiated learning is valued and actively encouraged through a carefully planned environment and the use of children's interests to enhance and motivate learning. At St George's we support children's learning through planned purposeful play activities, and a balance of child-initiated and adult-led play activities to provide the most effective learning opportunities. We ensure that continuous provision is not incidental, but is used intentionally to **reinforce and deepen taught learning**. Children access the outdoor environment **daily in all weathers.**

Staff observe children closely to assess and plan next steps using interests and current knowledge and skills. Timely interventions in child-initiated learning help children to meet their next step targets and make progress. Planned adult led learning introduces new concepts and knowledge, which is then reinforced through enhancements and provocations in the environment. All staff are involved in the planning and assessment cycle, and observations are shared regularly to ensure all adults are working and playing alongside children effectively to enable learning to take place. Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process.

Half-termly enquiry-based learning challenges ensure that the children are given opportunities for new learning and to experience a variety of first hand experiences (visits and visitors). These give the children a shared experience through which to explore and develop language, knowledge and skills. Role play and storytelling is also seen as a valuable tool to support the delivery of the curriculum and the development of key language skills, and is actively encouraged throughout the Early Years through the use of story scribing and story acting (Helicopter Stories).

Parents are valued as educators and partners and every effort is made to inform them of the EYFS curriculum whilst providing them with the opportunities to continue learning at home. Parents are also encouraged to inform school of their child's interests and achievements at home as these are an important part of each child's learning journey. Strategies to include and inform parents include, 'Stay and Play' sessions, Focus Child termly discussions with staff, phonics workshops, reading records, regular 'Learning Workshops', invites to regular local visits and story sharing sessions.

3.5 Impact

The impact of our curriculum is reflected in children who:

- make **strong progress from their starting points**
- develop **secure communication and language skills**
- demonstrate self-regulation, focus and resilience

- are well prepared for Year 1, with secure foundations in key knowledge

Assessment is used in line with the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage** to ensure all children are supported to achieve their full potential.

At St George's the impact of the EYFS Curriculum is that all children make at least good progress from their individual starting points. All children get the best possible start to their school life and develop the knowledge and skills to reach and exceed their potential as they move through school. They develop and nurture strong, positive attitudes to learning where they become proud and respectful of themselves, others, their school and their community. They are keen and inquisitive learners, becoming life-long learners – who love to learn and learn to love

4. Teaching and Learning

Teaching in the Early Years, as defined in the **Statutory Framework**, includes a broad range of approaches.

In line with **Strong Foundations**, we recognise that effective teaching is:

- **intentional and precise**
- rooted in **strong subject knowledge**
- responsive to children's needs

Adults:

- model language and thinking
- engage in **sustained shared thinking**
- provide clear explanations and demonstrations
- support children to practise and embed learning

High-quality interactions are central, reflecting the **Best Start for Life** emphasis on responsive, language-rich environments.

5. Assessment

Assessment is integral to effective teaching and learning and is carried out in line with the **Statutory Framework.**

In line with **Strong Foundations**, we:

- focus on **what children know and can do**, rather than excessive data collection
- use assessment to **inform next steps and adapt teaching**
- ensure assessment is **manageable and purposeful**

Children take part in the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment at the beginning of their Reception year. Staff also complete baseline assessments at the beginning of Nursery and Reception using checkpoints and ranges to identify starting points. At the end of Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The purpose of this is to provide reliable, valid and accurate assessments of each child at the end of the EYFS. Each child's level of development is assessed against the early

learning goals and indicates whether they are meeting expected levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). These are shared with Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of activities in Year 1. They are also shared with parents and carers and include commentary on the child's characteristics of learning.

6. Inclusion

In line with the **Statutory Framework** and **Best Start for Life**, we ensure that all

children receive the support they need to succeed.

We:

- identify needs early
- work closely with families and professionals
- adapt provision to ensure access for all
- provide targeted support to close gaps. This includes effective deployment of Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP), Disability Access Fund (DAF), and SEN Inclusion Funding (SENIF), alongside close partnership with the school SENCO.

We are committed to ensuring that **no child is disadvantaged by their starting point**.

7. Safeguarding and Welfare

We fully adhere to the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2026.**

In line with **Best Start for Life**, we recognise that children's safety, wellbeing and emotional security are fundamental to learning.

We ensure:

- safe and well-maintained environments
- appropriate staffing and ratios
- well-trained staff
- robust safeguarding procedures

We follow the whole school polices:

-Child Protection & Safeguarding (including KCSIE)

-Mobile Phone & Camera Use,

-Administering Medicines,

-Intimate Care

- Behaviour Management.

- Allergen and anaphylaxis

We are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). To ensure immediate protection and compliance with the statutory EYFS framework, all staff and volunteers adhere directly to the following core safeguarding procedures within our setting:

Reporting Allegations of Harm: Any allegation of harm (whether actual or likely) to a child committed by a member of staff, volunteer, or anyone living or working on the premises is reported immediately to our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). In line with statutory requirements, we notify the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Ofsted of any allegation of harm as soon as is reasonably practicable, and within 14 days at the very latest. We do not wait to establish "serious" harm before making a referral; any concern regarding potential or actual harm triggers immediate action.

Safer Recruitment and Vetting Checks: No new member of staff is permitted to start work in the EYFS setting until all required safer recruitment checks have been completed and verified, including a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate and a Children's Barred List check. Furthermore, all volunteers working within the EYFS are subject to mandatory Enhanced DBS and Children's Barred List checks prior to commencing their role, ensuring no unchecked adult is ever placed in a position of trust or unsupervised access with children.

Site Safety and Prohibited Animals: To maintain a safe physical environment, no dogs are permitted on the school premises or within the EYFS indoor and outdoor areas, with the sole exception of registered assistance dogs. Under no circumstances are any banned dog breeds (as defined under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, including XL Bullies and other prohibited types) permitted anywhere on the school site, including during drop-off and collection times.

SAFER SLEEP

We follow the safer sleep requirements set out in the EYFS statutory framework (September 2026, paragraph 3.86). Any child who sleeps or rests while in our care is placed down to sleep safely: on their back, in their own separate sleep space, on a firm, flat surface. In our setting this is the individual sleep mat provided by CDAT, which is firm, flat, waterproof and cleaned between uses.
If a child falls asleep elsewhere — for example on the carpet, in the reading corner or in an adult's arms a member of staff will gently settle them onto the CDAT-provided sleep mat in a safe sleeping position as soon as possible, rather than leaving them where they fell asleep. Sleep spaces contain only the mat or mattress and lightweight bedding, tucked in firmly below the child's shoulders. We do not use pillows, cushions, soft toys in sleep spaces, we ensure children's heads remain uncovered, and we keep sleep areas between 16–20°C so children do not become too hot or too cold.
Sleeping children are always within sight and hearing of staff and are checked frequently, with checks recorded. We talk with parents and carers about their child's sleep routines, record any agreed individual arrangements, and ensure that all staff who supervise sleeping children receive safer sleep training informed by NHS and Lullaby Trust guidance.

SCREEN USE AND DIGITAL DEVICES

We show regard to DfE guidance on children's screen use. Screen time in Nursery and Reception is strictly purposeful, never replaces adult-child interaction, it is prohibited during mealtimes/rest, and AI-powered apps/tools are not used directly by or with EYFS children. Full policy can be accessed under the EYFS screen time policy.

ORAL HEALTH

We promote oral health within Nursery and Reception. We teach oral health through the curriculum, ensuring children understand why it is important and how to promote it. In Nursery and Reception we aim to brush teeth daily in school. Children have their own toothbrushes and toothpaste provided by the LA. We work with parents to promote their understanding. Information is sent home and children are provided with tooth brushes and toothpaste for at home use.

8. Partnership with Parents and Carers

The **Statutory Framework** and **Best Start for Life** both emphasise the critical role of parents.

We:

- build **strong, respectful relationships with families**
- share information regularly
- support parents to **extend learning at home.** This home learning support includes: lending library books, phonics/language resources, and simple home activities to promote communication and relationships to empower parents in the home learning environment
- recognise parents as **children's first educators**

Best Start for Life centres on integrated support around families. School actively signposts families to local Family Hubs, health visiting teams, speech and language support, and funded childcare entitlements where needed.

9. Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned to ensure continuity of learning and emotional security.

In line with **Strong Foundations**, we ensure:

- strong transitions into Early Years
- effective information sharing
- continuity into Year 1 so that learning is built upon, not repeated or lost

Liaison with pre-school settings and induction

On entry to our Nursery class children have visits to the setting with their parents before they begin a staggered start in the Autumn Term.

On entry to Reception a parents' meeting is held by the Headteacher and Reception teacher in the summer term before they start to introduce parents/carers to the school. Parents/carers have the opportunity to meet the class teacher and find out more about full-time schooling at St George's.

The majority of new Reception children are familiar with the staff and setting as they attended our Nursery, for those that are new to Reception they have the opportunity to visit with their parents and then attend school for half days in their first week to help them to become familiar with our school before starting full-time in the second week. All children have the opportunity to visit their reception classroom for a few days in the summer term, and for a longer session which includes lunchtime.

Where children have attended a different setting prior to starting at St George's, staff visit them in their setting to aid the transition process further.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with:

- the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**
- national priorities such as **Best Start for Life**
- evidence from **Strong Foundations**

Leaders monitor provision to ensure that:

- the curriculum is implemented effectively
- teaching is of high quality
- all children make strong progress