



Building each other up –
with God as our firm foundation

St Paul's CE (VA) Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

Written by

B Clarke

Approved by:

J. Ferretti (Headteacher)

John Gill (Chair of
Governors)

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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
- A close working partnership between staff, parents /or carers and outside agencies when necessary
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

At St Paul's we believe that 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. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 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.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1170108/EYFS_framework_from_September_2023.pdf

3. Structure of the EYFS

At St Paul's, our Early Years provision consists of a 26-place morning Nursery and a 30 place Reception class.

Nursery sessions 8:40 – 11:45

Reception sessions

Am 8:40 – 11:45

Pm 12:30 – 3:15

4. Curriculum and Principles

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework which was updated January 2024

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

Overarching Principles

Four guiding principles shapes our practice at St Paul's. 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/or carers.
- children develop and learn in **different ways** (see "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.9) 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. (The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage January 2024 P 39)

The Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others. We use positive praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued in our school. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all individuals and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage.

Along with parents and carers, relationships are developed with other professionals and outside agencies to further support identified children within our settings. With support and partnership working together, we aim to narrow the attainment gap and improve outcomes for the children.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- observing our children's learning on a daily basis indoors and outdoors.
- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- the use of a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs (see the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum 2025 p 17)
- providing children with play-based learning opportunities through a balance of adult directed teaching and child-initiated learning.
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- an ambitious, language rich curriculum which is carefully sequenced to develop the skills and knowledge our children need for future development.
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- encouraging the children to collaborate and learn from each other.
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- taking into account each child's starting point, using our learning wall/planning cycle to identify next steps for individuals.

Positive Relationships

At St Paul's we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

Strong and Positive Relationships with parents are crucial for the development and well-being of young children, who can not always communicate their feelings.

We recognise that parents are a child's first and can be their most enduring educators. We value the contribution they make and recognise the role that parents play and their future role in educating their children. At St Paul's we work hard to encourage parents and carers to contribute and play an active role in their child's learning and development.

Organisation of Induction and Transition

Transition meetings are held for parents/carers, usually in the Summer term to share information of our School vision and aims, the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, school routines e.g. times of start and end of day and break times, school uniform

requirements etc. We invite children and parents to 'Stay and Play' sessions before starting in Nursery and Reception to support their transition.

Transition meetings are held between Reception and Year 1 staff to ensure children experience a smooth and well supported transition into Year 1. These meetings and ongoing professional conversations enable Year 1 staff to identify children's starting points for learning in Key Stage One. The Year 1 learning environment is planned and organised to support transition and enable ongoing access to learning through continuous provision at times as appropriate. Parents are invited to a 'Welcome to Year 1' meeting to support this.

4.1 Planning

The whole school curriculum is based on our progression of skills and knowledge documents, staff see the Early Years as a fundamental foundation on which to build on.

There are two cycles in Nursery to accommodate for those children who are with us for 18 months, these cycles enable children to develop and apply skills and knowledge through different topics

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account 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 and adapt their practice. 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.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Practitioners will enhance play and extend as needed to further develop individual skills and knowledge.

Our ongoing working walls and 'I can' statements that are displayed each week to support independent working and learning. The working wall is added to during sessions and used as a teaching station where the teacher could point out different learning points or resources that have been pinned up. Notes will be added to provide 'next steps' in order to inform future planning of both indoors and outdoors environments which is differentiated to meet the differing abilities of the children.

Our planning enables us :

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which embraces the themes, principles and commitments of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- To provide a happy, secure, stimulating and challenging environment whilst supporting a child's wellbeing.
- To provide opportunities for children to make choices which will facilitate independent learning, creative thinking and enable them to feel confident as learners.
- To provide opportunities for children to develop their communication, linguistic, investigative and problem solving skills through interaction with adults and other children.

4.2 Teaching

Teaching can only have an impact when a child feels happy and safe. Wellbeing is fundamental for our children in Early Years and is done most effectively when :

- Their emotions are accepted and understood in close, consistent relationships.
- Their experiences are congruent with their idea of who they are and their unique interests are valued.
- Their friendships and relationships are nurtured and valued; enhancing their sense of group belonging.
- They have free access to interesting and challenging play materials and spaces indoors and outdoors, in the setting and in the community.
- They have many opportunities for free- flow imaginative play outdoors.
- Their families, are supported and valued.
- Their professional carers are valued and supported for all their skills knowledge and attributes.
- They have a strong sense of belonging to their setting and local community, where they are listened to, acknowledged and affirmed and their contribution is sought and valued.
- They are confident with their environment, activities and opportunities provided.
- They are taken into account in society as a whole, so national and local policies ensure that all children's needs can be met by their families and communities.

We use the Leuven Scale to measure children's 'emotional well-being' and 'involvement' – two vital components of learning, development and progress in children.

Once children confident and happy, a mixture of adult-led and child-initiated activities and opportunities to explore each area of learning and development is implemented through

planned, purposeful play. 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.

Teaching is therefore delivered in a variety of ways, through a range of strategies, and are encouraged to become responsible for their own learning, sharing ideas which also helps other's learn. This builds the foundations for future visible learning in school.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create a stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment which is set up in learning spaces of continuous provision for all seven areas of learning. Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and follows children's interests.

Educational programs must involve activities and experiences for children, as follows:

- **Communication and language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities
- **Literacy development** involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measure
- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment
- **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

5. Assessment

Our assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and plan activities and further support. At St Paul's, 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. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

The ongoing assessments of the children are based on the high quality interactions with all pupils carried out by all staff and are linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Development Matters ages and stages. Staff use the SHREC approach to ensure children are able to engage in high quality sustained thinking and concentration.

Through conversations and discussions during Early Years staff meetings regarding any gaps, concerns, behaviours, interests, safeguarding and well being of the children. Alongside this staff will identify those children who are not on track and identify strategies and interventions that can be implemented to ensure children are 'on track'.

Staff work with pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, which is used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account information shared by parents and/or carers during home tasks set. i.e send a photo in of your child helping to tidy their bedroom.

Floor books are used in Prime area and children will re-visit learning and skills taught weekly or fortnightly, by returning to previous learning.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

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:

- On track
- Not on track

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.

6. Working with parents

As above, we recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. We offer Individual Support Plans to children that may need help and support from other agencies, or Early Help Support for families who may need additional support signposting in the right direction. We understand the importance of a stable and consistent approach in routines, managing behaviours, and role models for our children. This will ensure the children can self-regulate and their mental health is good before they can begin to learn and reach their full potential.

Staff work closely with parents, supporting them in the delivery of home activities, providing reading, maths and gross/fine motor skills workshops and offering any other support for any other issues that parents are concerned about. i.e toileting, eating, challenging behaviour and sensory needs.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through an open-door ethos, parent's evenings, school reports and weekly/half termly newsletters. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person (Class teacher or 'Family Group' leader) who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. During family group times children will have the opportunity to; speak and listen, review and reflect and continue to build positive relationships and develop their PSED skills. Class teachers will ultimately act as every child's key person. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

It is important to us that all children in our school are 'safe'. We aim to provide a high quality setting which is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. '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'.

At St Paul's, we understand our duty to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- promote healthy eating and discuss healthy foods daily identifying healthy food and drinks during snack time. Children are asked to keep a diary at home of meals and share favourite meals with us.
- help prevent the spread of infection and take appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We promote good oral health, inviting dentist in and talking about the importance of looking after their teeth and how we do this. We follow **statutory guidance** for safety around supervised tooth brushing

Alongside this we promote the importance of good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The importance of a healthy diet
- The importance of being active
- How to stay safe

Further safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Suitable people

We meet the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensuring that our staff and volunteers are appropriately qualified, and we carry out checks for criminal and other records through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in accordance with statutory requirements. We follow the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Ofsted guidance on checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children.

Staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children – whether received before, or at any time during, their employment with us.

Staffing Ratios

We follow the statutory guidelines regarding staffing ratio for Early Years Providers (other than childminders) as detailed in section 3 -The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements Statements 3.38 and 3.39.

Administering and storing medicines for children

The regulations regarding medications coming into school and their storage are outlined in the school's First Aid and Medical Needs Policy. Staff receive necessary training to support the administration of medicines requiring medical or technical knowledge such as annual asthma awareness and Epi-pen training.

Records of administration of medicines will be kept by the school as per the school's policy.

Children who are sick or infectious

If children appear unwell during the day – for example, if they have a temperature, sickness, diarrhoea or pains, particularly in the head or stomach – the office call the parents and ask them to collect the child, or to send a known carer to collect the child on their behalf. After diarrhoea or sickness, we ask parents keep children home for 48 hours following the last episode.

Where children have been prescribed antibiotics for an infectious illness or complaint, we ask parents to keep them at home for 48 hours before returning to the setting (as per Public Health Agency: Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings).

On identifying cases of head lice/threadworm, we inform all parents ask them to treat their child and all the family.

Staff refer to the [Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings](#) as required.

Food and drink

Staff keep a record of all medical and dietary needs (including allergies) in the classroom.

- We maintain the highest possible food hygiene standards with regard to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food. - Food is stored correctly and is checked to ensure it is in-date and not subject to contamination by pests, rodents or mould.

- Food preparation areas are cleaned before and after use.
- There are separate facilities for hand-washing and for washing-up.
- All surfaces are clean and non-porous.
- Waste food is disposed of daily.
- ♣ Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials are stored out of children's reach.
- ♣ Children do not have unsupervised access to kitchen areas.
- ♣ When children take part in cooking activities, they: - are supervised at all times; - understand the importance of hand-washing and simple hygiene rules; - are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water; - do not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment, such as blenders etc.

Recording of accidents

Any accidents requiring first aid are recorded in the class folder and parents informed verbally and with a slip at the end of the day. If an accident is more serious, parents may be informed during the day. If the child has had a head injury; the office receive the slip immediately and contact is made with the parents/carers by text message to inform them of the incident. The original slip is given to parents; upon collection.

If a child arrives in school with a noticeable mark or injury; the staff will acknowledge the concern and record this on an concern form / on CPOMS. These concerns are passed onto the DSL who then speak to the child / siblings / parents to ascertain the correct course of action. The conversation is recorded, providing the opportunity to track or link ongoing injuries if necessary.

We follow the guidelines of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) for the reporting of accidents and incidents.

Behaviour Management

Please refer to the school's Positive Behaviour Policy,

Risk Assessments

All staff recognise their responsibility to ensuring the environment, resources and activities are safe for the children. Ongoing risk assessments are carried out by all adults and appropriate action taken as necessary.

Intimate Care

Please refer to the schools Intimate Care policy for guidance and procedures on changing children and supporting children who are not toilet trained / have medical needs.

Pupils in Distress

The school recognises that there may be times when a pupil is distressed and needs to be comforted and reassured and this might include physical touch such as a caring parent would give. Staff must remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation.

Judgment will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil's distress, their age, the extent and cause of the distress.

Particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek further advice from their line manager or other appropriate person.

There may be times when a child becomes distressed due to intimate care being required. If the child is too distressed for this care to be carried out by a member of staff, parents / carers will be contacted.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Headteacher / Early Years Leader a minimum of every two of years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies/documents and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures Procedure for checking the identity of visitors Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	St Paul's CE (VA) Safeguarding Policy - website
Administering medicines policy / Procedure for responding to illness	First Aid Policy – school office / Teams Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy – school office / Teams Health & Safety Policy – School office / Teams

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Emergency evacuation procedure	Fire Procedures – School office / Teams
Intimate Care Policy	School office / Teams
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	St Paul's CE (VA) Complaints Policy - website