



## ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS C. E. (FOUNDATION) PRIMARY AND PRE-SCHOOL

### EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

This policy is written in support of the Vision and Values of St Michael and All Angels (Foundation) Primary and Pre-School.

<b>Last Reviewed</b>	Summer 2025
<b>Next Review Due</b>	Summer 2026

#### Other policies and procedures

This policy will be supported by the following policies:

- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Assessment and Feedback Policy

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### 1. Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to reach their full potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up”. EYFS Framework

### 2. What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

The Early Years Foundation Stage includes children from birth to 5 years. Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage but is vitally important in itself. For young children there is no distinction between work and play. Learning for young children should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes.

### 3. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

In the EYFS we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life by developing their personal, intellectual, social, emotional, creative and physical potential. This will be done through discovery, exploration, first-hand experiences and enjoyment.

We aim to support each child's welfare, learning, and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special individuals.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates; physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure, and caring environment where children feel happy, valued, and respected.
- Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching children to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes and experiences.
- Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions that may differ from their own.
- Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences that reflect children's personal interests and fascinations to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement, and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning.
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.

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### 4. The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

Teaching in the EYFS is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'. This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments' and 'Children Learn in Different Ways and at Different Rates.'

The curriculum consists of three **Prime** areas of learning, four **Specific** areas of learning and Characteristics of Effective Learning that run throughout.

#### **Prime Areas**

Personal, Social and Emotional Development  
Communication and Language  
Physical Development

#### **Specific Areas**

Literacy  
Mathematics  
Understanding the World  
Expressive Arts and Design

These Areas of Learning and Development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others, as all Areas of Learning and Development are closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum which allows children to make links between their learning.

### 5. Active Learning through Play

Each day is organised to provide a balance between the following:

- Child initiated Learning - children make choices from within the learning environment to develop knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Adult Initiated Learning- practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning.
- Adult Led Learning – children work individually or in small groups on planned activities matched to their needs and abilities.

We recognise the importance of children's play and believe it is an essential and rich part of children's learning. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative, to take risks and develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child, and is central to all that we do. Approaches to teaching include planned play, first hand meaningful experiences, modelling and scaffolding learning, and using talk as a major means of understanding the world around them.

### 6. Planning

We recognise the importance of a curriculum suited to the nature and needs of young children, and understand that this will be a curriculum where children learn best through both

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spontaneous and planned play, both indoors and outdoors. The curriculum is planned to build upon what children already know, can do and understand. The EYFS framework provides a long-term plan outlining the Learning Outcomes and Early Learning Goals to be covered throughout the academic year. Medium term planning provides an overview of learning which will take place over a few weeks and includes input from the children as to what they want to learn. Short term planning identifies planned learning for individual and groups of children across all areas of learning in both adult-led and child-initiated activities indoors and out.

### 7. Assessment and Record Keeping

The principal EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child-initiated play. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly and also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. All practitioners are involved in observing children and use them to support their developing knowledge of individual children. They provide evidence of children's abilities and interests and learning priorities are identified along with relevant learning opportunities to support children to make next steps and progress.

We use an electronic assessment tool to evidence children's learning which provides an individual Learning Journey, recording children's progress over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development. This is also accessible to parents so that they can add to their child's development journey throughout their time in Pre-School and Reception.

A statutory baseline assessment is carried out during the first six weeks of Reception. An informal baseline assessment will take place within 15 sessions in pre-school. At the end of Reception, children will be assessed against the EYFS Profile. Practitioners will use their knowledge and professional judgement of each child to inform their decisions. This information will be shared with the Year 1 teacher and parents/carers.

### 8. Key Workers

Children who attend Pre-School will be assigned a member of staff who is their Key Worker. This member of staff will work closely with their key group of children and track their learning and development. Parents should speak to their child's key worker with any queries. Reception children will work closely with all members of staff in the setting but tracking the children's learning will mostly be overseen by the class teacher.

### 9. The Learning Environment

We recognise that the learning environment is crucial to children's learning, and that it must be welcoming, attractive and stimulating. Children will feel secure, valued and confident and develop a sense of achievement through learning which is pleasurable and rewarding. Children are encouraged to think and talk about their learning and to develop self-control and independence.

The physical environment supports learning with appropriate space, facilities and equipment and is organised with due regard to health and safety. Resources are provided to allow children

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to access the curriculum, and are clearly organised and labelled to encourage full autonomy. Some resources will be continually available, whilst others will enhance the current topic, learning and/or children's interests. Wherever appropriate, we will attempt to reflect the world in which we live, through our provision of resources. Displays will reflect both current learning and children's work, and will be changed regularly. They will invite children to respond in different ways.

### 10. Parents as Partners

We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. We strive to build a partnership based upon shared understanding, mutual respect and open dialogue and recognise the importance of building and maintaining strong links between home and school. We value the role of parents as children's primary educators and encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

We build relationships with parents through:-

- Holding an Open Morning for prospective parents to see the life of the school and meet the staff.
- Providing a welcoming environment with approachable staff who are interested in the needs of all children.
- Pre-school children will receive a home visit from their key worker.
- Reception parents will be invited in for a 1:1 meeting with the Reception staff. New to school parents will receive a home visit.
- One formal consultation evening in Autumn and an optional consultation in Summer where achievements are discussed; however, parents/carers are encouraged to approach staff on an informal basis to celebrate achievement, express concerns etc. throughout the year.
- A formal written report during the year.
- Open mornings where parents and family are invited to see us in action.
- Parents are invited to weekly Celebration Worship and Church Services throughout the year.
- An open-door policy with approachable, friendly staff.

### 11. Transition

We want all children to settle quickly and confidently into their class and transition supports this process. We hold a welcome meeting for new parents/carers prior to the child's entry to Reception class. We also hold individual parent consultations with Reception practitioners prior to the child starting school where any worries or concerns can be discussed. Practitioners visit children at home and/or in their own settings if they don't attend St-Michael's Pre-School. The aim of these visits is to support practitioners to develop their knowledge and understanding of each child in order to make the transition period to school as smooth as possible. Reception children are offered two half day visits during the latter part of the summer term, to allow them to meet the practitioners and start to become familiar with the school environment. Pre-School

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children will receive a home visit from their new key worker. This will allow parents to discuss any queries they may have and for the children to begin to bond with their new teacher.

### 12. Equal Opportunities

All children have the right to equality of opportunity through both the taught and hidden curriculum. *“Providers have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference- not only so that every child is included and not disadvantaged, but also so that they learn from the earliest age to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society”.* (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage). We aim to foster and develop mutual tolerance and respect through our teaching and our actions, both with children and adults within the setting. This is done through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend what the child already knows, can do and understands.
- Using a range of teaching strategies based upon children's needs.
- Providing a range of opportunities to motivate, support and develop children's learning.
- Providing a safe and supportive environment where the contribution of all children is valued, and where racial, religious, disability, and gender stereotypes are always challenged.
- Using materials and resources that positively reflect diversity and don't discriminate or present stereotyped ideas.
- Differentiating work to meet the needs of more able and less able children, boys and girls, children with Special Educational Needs, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds and children from different ethnic groups and linguistic backgrounds.
- Monitoring children's progress, identifying areas of concern, and providing support when necessary.

### 13. Special Educational Needs (see SEN Policy)

It is recognised that early years' staff play a key role in working with parents to identify learning needs and in responding to areas of difficulty. Strategies to meet needs may be:

- Working with parents to ensure shared knowledge and understanding.
- Observations to present an overall picture of needs.
- Sharing observations and identified plan of action with all members of team to ensure continuity.
- Adapting teaching and/or resources.
- Additional Needs Plans to identify need and highlight strategies.
- Working together with staff from other agencies.
- Providing additional support, when needed.

If a need is identified, the SENCO is informed and the school's procedure put into place. A meeting will be held with parents to discuss concerns and a plan of action will be agreed. Parents will be kept fully informed at all times.

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