



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

St Bartholomew's Primary School

Date agreed by Governing Board	January 2023
Signature of Chair of Governors	<i>Bettina Carlyon</i>
Date to be reviewed by Governing Board	January 2025

This version supersedes all previous versions of this policy.

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INTRODUCTION

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their 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.'

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At St Bartholomew's Primary School children are usually admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday. Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At St Bartholomew's Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At St Bartholomew's Primary School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to

experience as they begin their journey through school.

- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do.
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors.
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment.
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

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THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE IS BASED ON FOUR THEMES:

1. **A Unique Child**
2. **Positive Relationships**
3. **Enabling Environments**
4. **Learning and Development**

1. A UNIQUE CHILD

At St Bartholomew's Primary School 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 and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at St Bartholomew's Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion, additional needs or attainment.

All families are valued within our school.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

We do this through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's current attainment.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively.
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy).
- Working closely with parents, carers, and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and that we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.

2. POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

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

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our open afternoons and induction meetings.
- 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 St Bartholomew's.
- Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement.

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- Inviting parents/carers and children to spend time in our reception classes for induction visits before starting school.
- 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.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Offering three parent/teacher consultation meetings per 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.
- Inviting parents to a range of activities throughout the school year; such as assemblies, workshops, Christmas productions, and sports day etc.

3. ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

At St Bartholomew's 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 attainment. 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. LEARNING AND DEVELOPING

Our curriculum for reception reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skills across a number of learning areas. They require a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships, and thrive.

The three prime areas are:

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

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Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and attainment within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

1. *Playing and exploring* - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. *Active learning* - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
3. *Creating and thinking critically* - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Assessment

During the first six weeks in reception, staff assess the current attainment of each child using a baseline assessment. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. We record each child's level of development against the 17 early Learning goals as Emerging or Expected.

SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE

'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.'
(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

At St Bartholomew's Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe, and stimulating, where children can grow in confidence.
- Promote good health.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the setting, furniture, and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for.

Good Health

All children are provided with a healthy snack each day and have access to fresh drinking water at all times.

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Intimate Care

“Intimate” care is any care which involves washing, touching, or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child’s age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet, and changing underwear following an accident. See separate ‘Intimate Care’ policy.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity, and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents/carers to give the right support to an individual child.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of those working in reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher, Deputy Head (Inclusion) and EYFS lead will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Children and Learning Committee of The Governing Body will also be part of this process.