



St George's Catholic Voluntary Academy
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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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 and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

Our early years setting is Foundation Stage 2 only. Children attend fulltime from September after an initial part time (0.5) transition week.

4. Curriculum

At St George's we believe that...

A high-quality Early Years education lays the foundations for children, with a focus on developing the whole child and to ensure 'school readiness'.

The EYFS provides children with a broad range of learning opportunities with the aim to embed firm foundations in the knowledge and skills needed for good future progress.

At St George's our provision offers the necessary balance of teacher led input and child initiated learning. Children are immersed in thematic learning based on an interleaving curriculum where new knowledge is taught, learned, remembered, revisited and applied.

We create a nurturing, stimulating environment in the school indoor and outdoor learning areas for the children develop physically, intellectually, socially and emotionally. Our children feel included, secure and valued.

At St George's we believe that language development is vital for all children. We have high aspirations and support them to 'be' in their learning. Children develop good comprehension of the words they are using and are able to use them in context and accurately as part of their real learning.

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 EYFS statutory framework.

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

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. Using thematic learning, based on an interleaving curriculum where new knowledge is taught, learned, remembered, revisited and applied all children are able to make progress.

A strong focus is made on the 3 prime areas within the first term, teaching and developing the 'characteristics of effective learning' before applying this knowledge to the 4 specific 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. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether an in-house intervention or specialist support is required - linking with relevant services from other agencies where appropriate.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. 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 a more formal learning setting, ready for year 1.

5. Assessment

At St George'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.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This, combined with our own school baseline, creates a 'whole picture' of every child and allows us to judge whether a child is 'school ready.'

Through carefully planned assessment opportunities as well as observing the children within free play, staff are able to assess each child against a set of 'point in time assessment statements' (PITAS) each term.

Analysis of the data allows us to determine patterns and/or common gaps between groups of learners.

Interventions can then be put in place to help support or challenge.

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 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 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

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Parents are invited in to school at least once per term to take part in retreat days, observe adult led sessions and/or watch class collective worships.

Termly Learning Conferences also allow a key member of staff to feed back to parents and/or carers individual outcomes and targets.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The importance of eating a healthy diet and the effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Amy Bennett (Assistant Head in Early Years) and Rachael Snowdon-Poole (Head Teacher) every 2 years.

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

