

St James' C. of E. School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction:

At St James' C of E Primary School we believe in the concept of the learning community and lifelong learning. Through our teaching we aim to equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to become independent learners, with the ability to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate learning and teaching experiences help children to continue to develop and explore their potential.

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

Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers

Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

3. Structure of the EYFS

At St. James' we have one Nursery class (approx. 26 places) and one Reception class (approx. 30 places). In the Nursery, to welcome children and families to our school we carry out home visits in the Summer Term prior to starting at St. James' in September. The home visits are a way for staff to meet children and families. They are also an opportunity for staff to give parents and carers plenty of useful information on how to prepare their child for school. When children begin in Nursery in September this is typically on a part-time basis (either mornings or afternoons) at first. Gradually we increase the hours depending on how suitable this is for each individual and aim to get children attending Nursery on a full-time basis (8.50am-3.20pm) as soon as is appropriate. Again, this is always on an individual basis and will always be discussed between parents and staff. Most children attend the Reception class on a full-time basis but again this depends on the suitability of this for each individual child. Children joining our Reception class from another nursery or home setting will have the opportunity to begin by way of a phased induction as well but this too is dependent on the needs of each individual. Children attend our Nursery during the academic year that they turn 4 and they attend our Reception class during the academic year they turn 5. There is no charge for attending our Nursery setting.

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4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS.

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

At St. James', staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. These activities and experiences tend to not only incorporate important events and themes e.g. the seasons, festivals and celebrations but also the direct interests of a class and its' individuals e.g. dinosaurs, fairytales, popular stories etc. In order to do this, practitioners 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. 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. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

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. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through positive interactions and high quality resources. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance

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gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning in Year 1.

5. Assessment

At St James', 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. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. Observations are made both in child-initiated independent play and in adult-initiated 1:1, group and whole class activities.

At the end of Nursery practitioners review all children's progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This "Progress Check" highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

At the end of the EYFS (in the Reception class in Summer), 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
- Exceeding expected levels or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers along with a written report providing additional information highlighting the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. At St James' we have a strong and collaborative EYFS team who know their children really well. Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. In our setting, the key person for each child in Reception is the class teacher. In Nursery the class teacher and the Teaching assistant both act as key person for 13 children, however the class teacher retains responsibility for the whole class.

Parents and carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development in a variety of ways at St. James.' Staff are always available to chat to informally at pick-ups and collections. If parents have more detailed things to discuss or concerns, they are able to arrange a separate time to meet with the class teacher. We also hold 2x parents evening sessions a year to discuss progress and learning and send home a written report at the end of the school year. Moreover, the progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

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7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Senior Leadership Team and the EYFS Leader every three years.

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

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

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy