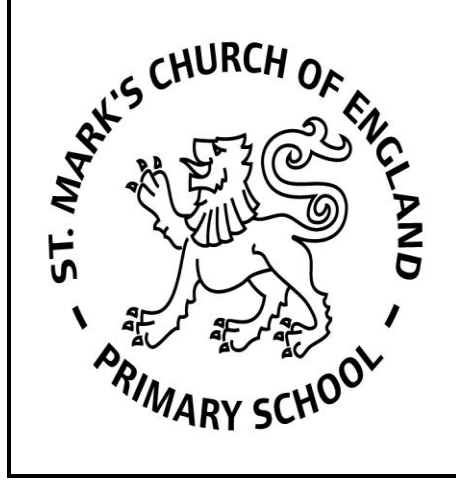
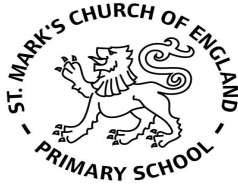


Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



**"Every Child,
Every Chance,
Every Day"**



Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day

St Marks CE Primary School **Policy for EYFS**

Governors and staff are committed to delivering the very best for our children. Our Vision is fundamental to our role as a Church of England School with its roots coming from the original blessing and verse presented to our school on its official opening in 1955.

Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Psalm 119 Vs 105

The following five components describe the desired outcomes we offer through it.

- *Together, we will prepare you for life and learning*
- *Together, we will teach you to live within the values of God's word*
- *Together, we will safely lead you on your journey*
- *Together, we will guide you to a fulfilling future*
- *Together, we will forever help you to grow in confidence*

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, the EYFS applies to children attending our two-year-olds provision, our Nursery from the age of three years, to the end of the Reception year when they are five years of age.

Our Aims

The aim of this policy is to support a rich, interesting and stimulating learning and teaching environment, an environment that allows children to fully develop their skills and abilities. The objective of this policy is to establish a consistent approach to high quality learning and teaching which inspires all children and enables them to become confident and engaged learners.

We want this policy to Foster a harmonious atmosphere, which supports and promotes self-esteem build confident communicators and support children's development in all areas of the EYFS.

We support every child as an individual and help every child to grow up feeling confident about their own identity, in a spirit of friendship, understanding fairness and the rights of others, always valuing diversity.

We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation (2021)* which clearly states:

'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.'

Our Early Years Foundation Stage aims to:

- Create a happy, caring, secure and stimulating environment for all children;
- Encourage confidence, independence and a desire to learn;
- Focus on the development of every child as an individual, valuing and building on their previous experiences and responding to their individual needs;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Develop in children an enquiring mind, an interest in learning and an enthusiasm for the next stage of school life;
- Provide good foundations for later learning;
- Encourage good social relationships, developing self-esteem and respect for others.



The Four EYFS Principles

The statutory framework is based on four guiding principles, which shape practice in early years settings. 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** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
 - Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See “the characteristics of effective teaching and learning” at paragraph 1.15). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- A Unique Child
 - Positive Relationships
 - Enabling Environments
 - Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At St Mark’s we aim to work in close partnership with parents/carers, in order to provide an environment that is happy, loving, warm, stimulating and safe. Our children will be stimulated and nurtured to become competent, confident, independent and co-operative learners. We value all children’s cultural inheritance, diversity of language and beliefs and foster the development of the whole child; socially, emotionally, creatively, physically, academically and spiritually in an environment that is safe, calm and challenging.

Parental involvement is crucial in enabling us to reach our aims and is encouraged both in and outside the early years environment.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

Parents and carers are our children’s first and foremost enduring educators and we are committed to working in close partnership with them in order to enable each child to achieve their potential. Young children are eager learners and all adults have an important role in sustaining that eagerness. We highly value the contribution that parents and carers make and seek to maintain an effective partnership between home and school by:

- Demonstrating that we value and respect the role of the parents/carers as the first educators by listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns and aspirations they have;
- Ensuring that parents and carers are provided with detailed information prior to admissions, enabling them to feel confident about the transition process;
- Visiting all EYFS children in their home setting prior to them starting , to allow practitioners and parents to discuss their children's circumstances, interests, skills and needs and for children to meet their teacher/key person;
- Inviting all EYFS parents to an induction meeting during the term before or after their child starts nursery or school;
- Children having an opportunity to spend time with their new key person or teachers during 'Moving Up Days';
- Demonstrating that we value linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning;
- Welcoming parents and carers into the classroom to share their expertise and enrich the learning opportunities provided;
- Ensuring parents and carers are kept well informed about the curriculum and school life via parent's notice boards, letters, communication book, leaflets and school website;
- Providing opportunities for parents to add comments and observations relating to their child's achievements;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, school and parents/carers, e.g. sports day, trips, themed activity days, etc.;
- Other partnerships including coffee mornings, Parents and carers groups, Come Dine With Me Lunch sessions, Come Learn With Me sessions, Healthy Eating classes etc.;

We also Share information regarding a child's progress and achievements and how parents and carers can support the next stage of learning through workshops, formal meetings, leaflets and reports.

Enabling Environments

The EYFS learning environments, both inside and out, are carefully organised into learning areas, where children are enabled to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Children are supported to explore and learn securely and safely and are helped to develop across all seven areas of learning.

Each EYFS class has access to an outdoor space, which has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active.

Learning Through Purposeful Play

Well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, provides key opportunities for young children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. We recognise the importance of adult support and a secure environment in ensuring effective high quality, purposeful play.

Effective high quality play opportunities involve:

- Planning and resourcing a challenging environment;
- Supporting children's learning through purposefully planned play activities;
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play;
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play.

The secure environment and adult support in play enables children to:

Activities and experiences are organised and planned to promote independence. Opportunities to play co-operatively, alone, or time is given for children to stand and observe. There must be time and space allowed to develop play both inside and outside, safely and securely. The environment is aesthetically appealing with lots of examples of children's current work included in child centred displays. Displays include examples of children's speech where possible and appropriate and give children opportunities to talk about, review and think about their previous experiences and learning (metacognition). Clear guidelines and boundaries promote positive behaviour. Challenging social situations are seen as opportunities for growth and development, explaining and working with children to help them feel strong and safe, and to learn how to manage difficult issues and conflicts in appropriate ways.

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences which help them to make sense of the world;
- Practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
- Be alone, be alongside others or cooperate as they talk or rehearse their feelings;
- Take reasonable risks, making and learning from mistakes;
- Think creatively and imaginatively;
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.

Active learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning. Children are given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, by offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the setting to extend their learning.



Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected. 'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.'

Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

'In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.' (1.9 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021)

The 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; and
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

The Early Years Curriculum

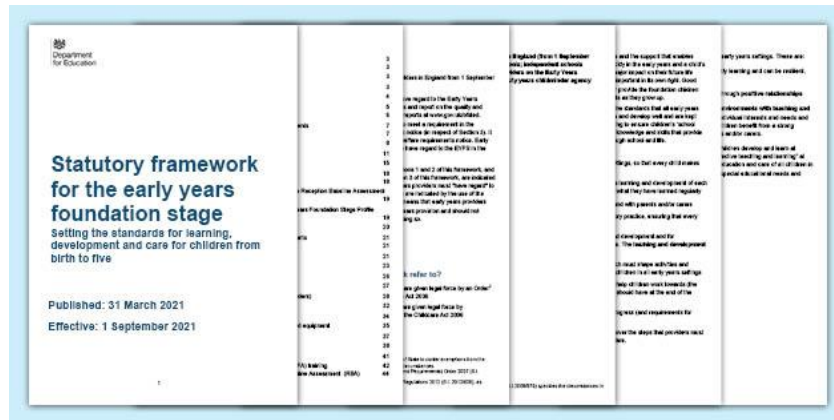
The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise:

- The seven areas of learning and development and the educational programmes (described below)
- The early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the reception year
- The assessment requirements (when and how practitioners must assess children's achievements, and when and how they should discuss children's progress with parents and/or carers.)

Development Matters and the Birth to five, non-statutory curriculum guidance for the EYFS are available to support providers in their delivery of the EYFS learning and development requirements. As this document is non-statutory, Ofsted and inspectorates of independent schools will not have regard to it in carrying out inspections and it is up to providers to decide how they approach the curriculum.



The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure progression and continuity of skills in seven areas of learning. The level of progress children are expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS are defined by the early learning goals.



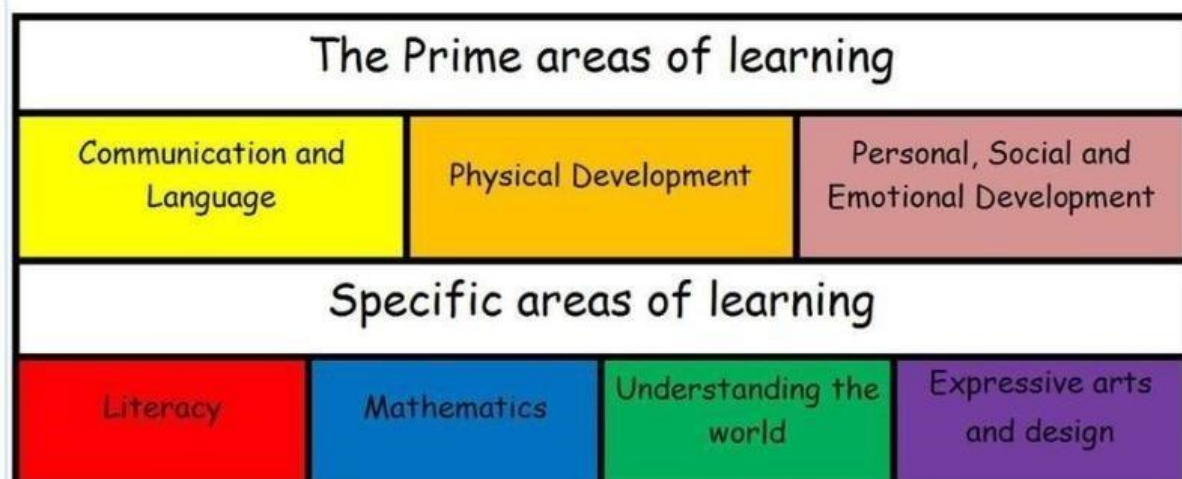
‘Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas.

The **three prime areas** reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school

It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.’ (1.6 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014) These areas of learning depend on each other to support a rounded approach to early years' development. All the areas will be delivered through planned, **purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.**

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. These are the prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development



There are three prime areas:

Communication and Language Development (*listening and attention; understanding and speaking*) 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. **The development and use of communication and language is at the heart of young children's learning.** Opportunities will be provided for children to use their skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes, and to be supported in developing the confidence and disposition to do so. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, the children will become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Physical Development (*moving and handling; health and self-care*) involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food. St Mark's is a healthy eating school and opportunities to support children's understanding of being healthy, is a high priority.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (*Self-Regulation Managing Self, Building Relationships*)

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children are supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want, and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably.

There are also four specific areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:

Literacy (Comprehension, Word Reading and writing) involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. We will endeavour to promote a love of reading and writing through providing an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

Mathematics (number, Numerical Patterns) 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 measures. Experiencing concepts in a practical context and linking experiences to everyday life is crucial in the early stages of development. Children will compare quantities in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity; - Explore and represent patterns within numbers, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally. The children will be provided with opportunities to practice and extend their skills in these areas and to gain confidence and competence in their use.

Understanding the World (Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities, The Natural World) involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community by providing them with opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, and the environment. In this area of learning, children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding, which help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in science, history and geography.

Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials; being imaginative and Expressive) 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. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding.

The statutory early learning goals outline the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. Other children, depending on their individual needs, will be working towards some or all of the goals – particularly some younger children, some children with learning difficulties and disabilities and some who are learning English as an additional language.



The Early Years Foundation Stage at St Mark's C of E Primary School

Planning and assessment

In the first term, the majority of our planning is focused on the three prime areas. Key people spend quality time getting to know their key children and their families. This trusting relationship helps children to settle into nursery and grow in confidence in their new environment. Our assessment starts with home visits and settling-in.

Long and medium term planning are based around half-termly, yet flexible themes. Planning incorporates a balance between adult and child initiated activities, and experiences, which take account of children's individual needs, stages of development and interests. Planning incorporates all areas of learning and development and puts the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage into practice. **'Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.'** (1.6 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014)

Our objectives:

Dialogue with parents, so that we can work in a respectful partnership to support children's learning at home and in school. This dialogue is underpinned by sharing and discussing What to expect in the early years foundation stage: a guide for parents produced by the Department for Education (DfE 2021). It is a comprehensive guide spanning **birth to five years** across all areas of learning and development. Not only does it focus on what a child might love to do but also on what a child needs to have from the adults around it to have the best chance to develop well.

Assessment does not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is on track, practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement.

We use the **Development Matters and Birth to five alongside the Early Learning Goals** to assess the children in the Foundation Stage in each learning area. Practitioners plot the individual progress of each child as they grow and develop. As the child progresses through the EYFS, staff will make judgements based upon their observations of the child in all seven areas of learning.

Assessment at the start of the reception year – the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) 2.7. The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. 2.8. The statutory guidance for the administration of the RBA is set out in Annex B. The guidance covers all intakes in reception within an academic year including during autumn, spring and summer terms

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. This includes those children who, by exception, complete the EYFS in an Ofsted or childminder agency registered setting and who are due to start school in year 1 in the following academic year.

During the year, there are formal opportunities to feedback information to parents and carers through parent/carer consultations in the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms. Parents and carers are vital partners in the assessment process. Towards the end of the academic year, a written report, covering the seven areas of learning, will be given to parents and carers indicating whether children are met or not met the expected levels

Reception to Year 1 Transition

‘As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.’ (1.8 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014)

Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings, throughout the Reception year. Children are introduced to challenges through a variety of carefully planned activities in different learning areas and are supported to meet challenges daily. Children participate in adult-led activities every day and structured phonics, reading, writing and mathematics sessions are part of the daily timetable. Reception practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer terms, encouraging less dependence on adult support.

Welfare Arrangements

‘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.’ (3.1 statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

At St Mark’s, we recognise our responsibility for promoting the welfare of our youngest children:

- All adults with access to our children will receive the appropriate level of CRB checking and as part of the induction process, will have discussed and signed a school code of conduct;
- All staff employed by St Mark’s, receive a thorough induction training to help them understand their roles, responsibilities and key information about how things work in the Federation;
- All staff employed by St Mark’s, will undertake regular Child Protection training and are expected to follow the school guidance in following up a cause for concern;
- Staffing will be organised to ensure the safety of the children and to ensure staff/child ratios are always followed;

All staff will be trained to the level appropriate to their responsibility;

- Paediatric First aid will only be administered by trained personnel. Procedures are in place to inform parents/carers of accidents involving their child;
- Procedures are in place to ensure security of children and the safe release of children into the care of individuals named by the parent/carer;
- As a healthy school, there is a focus on emotional well-being, healthy eating and physical activity. Good health will be promoted and appropriate action will be taken when children are ill;
- Routines are in place to support children’s growing understanding of personal hygiene;
- Children’s behaviour is managed effectively through the use of a whole school behaviour system, which is adapted to the stage and development of individual needs;

- Risk assessments will be undertaken and reviewed regularly;
- Indoor and outdoor premises, furniture and equipment will be regularly checked and repaired, washed etc. as required;
- Records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting will be maintained;
- Policy documents will be available for parents and carers.

Reviewed and ratified by Governing body	Spring 2022		
Next Revision (Please highlight as appropriate)	Annual	Biennial	Tri-annual
To be reviewed	Spring 2024		