

# St Laurence Church Infant School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Approved by: Whole Governing Board

Last revised on: May 2025

Next review due by: May 2028

*Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."*

Matthew 19 v 14

## UNICEF Rights of the Child



### Article 28. Access to education

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free. Secondary and higher education should be available to every child. Children should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level possible. Discipline in schools should respect children's rights and never use violence.

### Article 31. Leisure, play and culture

Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

## Introduction

St Laurence Church Infant School is a three form entry school with children aged between four and seven. The Early Years Foundation Stage at St Laurence Church Infant School comprises of our Reception classes. Each academic year, 90 children join Reception in September.

## Aim

We aim to make the children's first year in school a happy and secure one. We hope to give them a love for learning which they will carry with them throughout their life. We are proud of each and every one of our children in Reception and strive to support them in all areas of their school life. We seek to provide quality and consistency so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind. The four overarching principles in early years settings are:

*Do all things with love: love of learning, life and each other"*

- *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 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.*
- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2024

## Transition

On acceptance of a place at St Laurence Church Infant School the school makes contact with all the pre-school providers to establish friendship groups and any Special Educational Needs that the child may have. This information is then used to inform decisions on class placement and support in transition.

During the Summer Term, children and their parents/carers are invited to a workshop where they meet their teacher and teaching assistant and the rest of the children in their class. Children are invited to stay for part of the morning with a grown up. Children are given a transition sheet with photographs of key people and visual reminders of their new school.

Prior to the child's first day of school, teachers and teaching assistants will visit each child at home. We see this as a two-way process and strive to learn as much as possible at this time.

## The Curriculum

Teachers in Reception plan a broad and balanced curriculum based on the Early Years Outcomes. There are seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. 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

Children are also supported in four specific areas, through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied. The **specific** areas are:

*Do all things with love: love of learning, life and each other"*

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

Teachers' planning reflects opportunities in all seven areas as follows:

- **Communication and Language** The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development.
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** 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.
- **Physical Development** Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives.
- **Literacy** It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).
- **Mathematics** Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.
- **Understanding the World** Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity.

## The Curriculum Structure Early Years Foundation Stage

Structure of day

8.45 - 9.05 Registration and short session

9.10 - 9.30 Collective Worship

9.30 - 12.15 Session 1

*Do all things with love: love of learning, life and each other"*

12.15 - 1.05 Lunch

1.05 - 1.15 Registration

1.15 - 3.15 Session 2

*"Play is a child's work and this is not a trivial pursuit."*

Alfred Adler

The Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024) does not prescribe a particular teaching approach. However, it does state:

*Effective practice is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other and through adult-guided learning.*

In Reception, we value, encourage and support play. Each learning session includes a wide range of activities throughout the carefully planned indoor and outdoor continuous provision.

In planning and guiding children's activities, teachers reflect on the different ways that children learn and children are encouraged to be involved in this thought process. The three Characteristics of Effective Learning are key to children's development:

- 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
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

There is consistency across the three classes. The continuous provision in all three classes is carefully planned to promote children's independent access to the curriculum. The provision is audited regularly to ensure there is continual opportunity to challenge children and to ensure that every child makes good progress. Teacher led base times are planned with all teachers, based on on-going assessments.

A floor book is used to record support retrieval of learning. The children's achievements are celebrated on their named gallery board, which is updated regularly.

Children in Reception also have a daily phonics session, mathematics session and reading time. The children enjoy access to an outdoor patio and also outside physical development time both in the morning and the afternoon.

*Do all things with love: love of learning, life and each other"*

## Assessment

The Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage 2024 states:

*When forming a judgement about whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, teachers should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. This is enough evidence to assess a child's individual level of development in relation to each of the ELGs. Recorded, written or photographic evidence is not required.*

Furthermore,

*Assessment should not involve prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement and should not be required to prove this through collection of physical evidence.*

Therefore, we ensure that the evidence and paperwork we collect for assessment processes are minimal, purposeful and do not detract from quality interactions with children. Assessments in Reception include:

- Objective led planners
- RE Learning Journey
- Reading records and phonics tracker
- Class floor book
- Mathematical skills tracker

Quality interactions with children allow teachers and teaching assistants to quickly identify next steps with the children in the moment.

Within each child's first six weeks of school, teachers administer the Reception Baseline Assessment, which was statutory from September 2021. Teachers and teaching assistants also observe children closely to form their own baseline assessments of the children.

Parents/ carers have the opportunity to attend parents' evenings each term. They are also invited to attend a workshop each term where an adult can work alongside their child in their

*Do all things with love: love of learning, life and each other"*

child's classroom setting. Parents are asked to share their views at this time and comments are used in children's Learning Journeys. If a child needs additional support in a particular area, we will not wait until parents evening but involve parents at the earliest opportunity.

Moderation takes place across the year group throughout the year to ensure consistency. We also make the most of opportunities to moderate across year groups and with other schools.

At the end of Reception year, teachers report on children's progress against the seventeen Early Learning Goals. Teachers assess whether children are working at the expected level, or an emerging level, for each Early Learning Goal. A child at the emerging level has not yet met the Early Learning Goal.

Parents receive an end of school year report in which the results of the end of year profile are reported. Teachers also make comments on the three characteristics of effective learning. This information is also shared with Year One teachers and used to inform planning as children move into Key Stage One.

## **The seventeen Early Learning Goals**

### **Communication and Language**

#### **ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

#### **ELG: Speaking**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher. Teacher should be understood to refer to any practitioner working with the child.

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## Personal, Social and Emotional Development

### **ELG: Self-Regulation**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate;
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

### **ELG: Managing Self**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge;
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly;
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

### **ELG: Building Relationships**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others;
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers;
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs. Physical Development

### **ELG: Gross Motor Skills**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others;
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing;
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

### **ELG: Fine Motor Skills**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing
- using the tripod grip in almost all cases;
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery;
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

## Literacy

## **ELG: Comprehension**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;
- Anticipate - where appropriate - key events in stories;
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

## **ELG: Word Reading**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

## **ELG: Writing**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

## **Mathematics**

### **ELG: Number**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number;
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5;
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

### **ELG: Numerical Patterns**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system;
- Compare quantities up to 10 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 up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

## **Understanding the World**

## **ELG: Past and Present**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society;
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

## **ELG: People, Culture and Communities**

Children at the expected level of development will: - Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps; - Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class; - Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and - when appropriate - maps.

## **ELG: The Natural World**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

## **Expressive Arts and Design**

### **ELG: Creating with Materials**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function;
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used;
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

### **ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher;
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs;
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and - when appropriate - try to move in time with music.

## **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements**

'Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the people caring for them'.

Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2024

At St Laurence Church Infant School, we take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well. We recognise the importance in safeguarding all children, ensuring the suitability of adults who have contact with them, promoting good health, managing behaviour and maintaining records, policies and procedures.

We adhere to the St Laurence Church Infant School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at all times.

We constantly and informally risk assess our indoor and outdoor provision to ensure there are no hazards which could cause harm. Educational visits and home visits have a more formal written risk assessment which are shared with staff, parents and children as appropriate.

During the first few weeks at school children are made aware of the expectations of behaviour and the positive outcomes from following school rules. (St Laurence Church Infant School Behaviour Regulation Policy.) All staff have high expectation and are consistent across the classes.

At St Laurence Church Infant School the Key Person for each child is their class teacher. The class teacher works closely alongside the teaching assistant to observe and develop a thorough knowledge of all the children in their care.

Children have access to fresh drinking water. During the morning session, children can access fresh fruit and milk.

Great care is taken to ensure that home time arrangements are adhered to at all times. Children are only released to a known adult. If a different adult wishes to collect the child, this is only allowed if a member of staff has been informed. If the member of staff is not aware then a phone call will be made to confirm the arrangement.

## **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2024 states that:

*Do all things with love: love of learning, life and each other"*

*Early years providers must have arrangements in place to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).*

At St Laurence Church Infant School, we plan to provide quality teaching and consistency so that *'every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind'* (The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2024). If a child does not appear to be making good progress in a particular area, at any time of the year, we will put support in place and talk informally to parents. This support could, for example, be through a Speech and Language group, additional reads or precision teaching. If a child continues to cause concern we will speak to the parents and make a referral to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-Ordinator (SENDCo).

Before the children start school, we liaise with pre-school providers and parents to ensure that we can put appropriate support in place from the outset. We create a One-page Profile to detail how this will happen. Where appropriate, the SENDCo makes contact with pre-school providers and families of children identified with Special Educational Needs.

The learning and development of children with SEND is supported through our knowledge of each child as an individual. Class teachers work with children, parents and under guidance from SENCO to make appropriate adaptations to the environment, provision of learning aids and additional support and differentiation to the curriculum. Evidence based interventions are used, where appropriate, to support children to close the gap with their peers.

We follow the school Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy. As well as a One-page Profile, children in Reception with SEND may have an Intimate Care Plan, a Physical Difficulties Management Plan, and Individual Target Plan or a Behaviour Management Plan written for them. External agencies may be involved if and when appropriate. These may include an Educational Psychologist, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Communication and Autism Teacher, Pupil School Support Teachers and School nurse. Support for children with SEND follows the assess-plan-do-review cycle.

## **Equal opportunities**

As a Church school, one of the core distinctive values we promote is to: "Imagine the journey in another's footsteps, nurturing, understanding and respecting all". We ensure that every child is included and supported and adhere to the school's Equality Information and Objectives Policy.