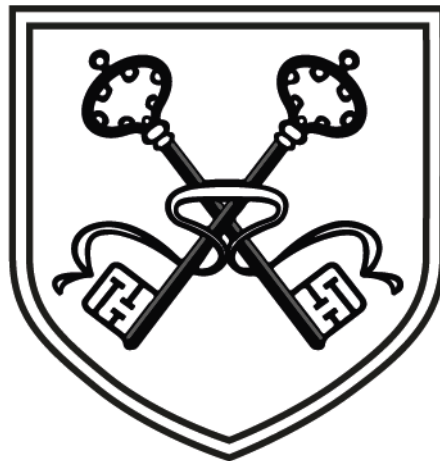


# **St Peter's Church of England Primary School**

St Peter's



Church of England  
Primary School

*Excellence in all we do. Excellence in who we are.  
Excellence in our service with others.*

**Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

**December 2021**

# The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St Peter's Primary School children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday. As with all schools, we follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, laid out by the Department for Education.

"The EYFS is a distinct and important phase in education. It places an equal priority on supporting children's social and emotional development, and their learning. The early years are the crucial time for developing children's enjoyment of learning, their engagement and motivation. It's an important time for children to develop their ability to persist and show gritty determination." Julian Grenier

## Aim

At St Peter's Primary School we aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We aim to secure a firm foundation of learning for all pupils, where children learn well and are happy, feel secure and are healthy and safe. Through achieving this, pupils will develop a broad range of skills and dispositions enabling them to confidently access future learning.

## Philosophy

It is our belief that a child's early experiences impact their future, in terms of how they approach new opportunities, their resilience and their self-esteem. At St Peter's, we therefore recognise the Reception year as an important phase of their learning, where children's previous learning experiences, as well as new opportunities, will link with their acquisition of key skills for the future. We believe that each child is an individual, with their own interests, experiences, needs and ways of learning. We also understand that the support, care and opportunities that children receive is essential to their development. This includes the people around them and the environment that is available to them. We firmly support the overarching principles of the framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, which are:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environment
- Learning and Development

## Principles in practice

### A unique child

#### ***Equal Opportunities and inclusion***

The Foundation Stage operates within the school's policies for equal opportunities and inclusion. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at St Peter's Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities.

All families are valued within our school. As individuals, we understand that children will start their school life at St. Peters with a wide and varied range of previous experiences, interests, and will already have strong relationships with people in their lives who care for them. Getting to know these things is the first step in enabling us to meet each child's individual learning needs. We will do this by:

- Making links with parents and adults within their previous setting to find out about each pupil, through induction meetings for parents, induction sessions for pupils, meetings with pre-school settings and parent consultations.

- Having an open door policy, throughout the year, where parents can talk to staff informally, making the classroom an open environment where parents and carers feel welcome;
- Providing a play-based curriculum with a wide range of opportunities for pupils to explore new skills through their own interests and the interests of others;
- Encouraging pupils to talk about their interests, share their ideas with others and show an interest in the opinions of others.

We are ambitious for each pupil, and we encourage children to achieve their personal best. We value motivation and praise pupils for showing this. Regular informal and formal assessments, taken from a range of perspectives are used to monitor the progress of each child, and we will identify any potential special needs as early as possible. Concerns will always be discussed with parents at an early stage. Meeting the individual needs of pupils will be addressed by:

- Tailoring the curriculum to ensure each child's learning stage is being met;
- Providing a challenging curriculum that will ensure each pupil is working to their best ability;
- Having a reflective and flexible approach to planning opportunities for pupils to make best progress;
- Using interventions with a child that may need additional support to achieve in a particular area of learning, this may be individual or small group support;
- Closely monitoring progress in a specific area where a pupil may need support;
- Working with parents to further support pupils at home.

## ***Welfare***

It is important to us that all children in the school are and feel 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand how they can support others. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

At St. Peter's we understand the specific legal requirements as stated in the EYFS Statutory Framework. They are covered in school policies for Safeguarding, Health and Safety (including Risk Assessments and First Aid), Administration of Medicines, Special Educational Needs/Inclusion, Behaviour and Anti-Bullying.

## **Positive Relationships**

We believe that for pupils to be strong confident and independent they need to have confidence in the people around them. At St Peter's we recognise that relationships built on trust and respect are vital to a child's achievements. All staff involved in the EYFS aim to develop respectful, secure relationships with all children and their parents/carer, interacting positively and taking time to listen and communicate with them.

## ***Partnerships***

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators, and therefore recognise the role parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children. We also understand that relationships between parents and staff at the school play an important role in each child's future, including their being part of a school community and we value being partners with parents through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at induction meetings and parent meeting in September
- Arranging, where possible, visits by a teacher to all childcare provisions prior to children starting school.
- Providing information about commencing Reception at St. Peter's
- Giving children the opportunity to spend time in their Reception class for an induction visit 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 and again in Term 4 to discuss their child's progress.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will approach parents/carers to discuss them.
- Written contact through school newsletters
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics and maths.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits and photographs etc.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception.
- Providing regular opportunities for parents to collaborate with their child and the school, in the form of workshops, celebrations and performances;
- Asking parents to support their child by listening to them read and working with them on any other homework tasks;
- Encouraging parents to volunteer within the school community, for example listening to pupils read in school, supporting school excursions or other events.
- Providing information about children's learning on 'Seesaw' (a learning platform)

## Enabling Environment

We at St. Peter's recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is planned to extend their learning through providing a range of activities and resources.

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 children's interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children live in and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer as we believe this encourages independent learning. We ensure resources and spaces are safe to use and are checked regularly.

## Learning and Development

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

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

In addition to these areas of learning, are the Characteristics of Effective Learning, which develop a pupil's approach to learning as they develop. We believe these to be a powerful reflection on how to develop skills to be an effective and motivated learner. These are:

- **Playing and Exploring** – engaging with activities and trying out new things
- **Active learning** – persisting with activities, maintaining focus and enjoying meeting challenges
- **Creating and thinking critically** – the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just the arts. Adults support children's thinking and help them make connections, to find new ways to do things and to change strategy as needed.

Throughout the year, it is our aim to deliver a curriculum where each of the seven areas of learning are taught; promoting high standards of progress and achievement across the curriculum. The prime areas underpin each pupil's abilities to achieve well in the specific areas of learning, and so in the earlier stages of the year these take priority, though teaching of the specific areas also takes place. As the year progresses, the balance will shift to a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability in the prime areas. Throughout the year we ensure that pupils develop their Characteristics of Effective Learning, providing varied ways of delivering ideas and evaluating ways that pupils learn.

## ***Assessment and Planning***

At St Peter's Primary School: 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. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must 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, 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. Staff at St Peter's Primary School will use their experience and expertise, as well as keeping up to date with relevant research and training, to ensure that pupils are being delivered the best possible approaches to learning.

At St Peter's Primary School, 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).

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 (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

# Starting school at St Peter's

## Classes

The 90 children are organised into 3 classes of 30 children. This is done before the information evening for parents in June.

The classes need to have an equal mix of boys and girls and Autumn/Spring/Summer birthdays. We also make sure that children with additional needs are equally spread across the classes.

Parents of twins are given the choice of whether to have them in the same class or in different classes.

Information from the pre-school settings may guide our decisions.

For further information please refer to our 'Class Composition Guidance'.

## September

The children start in September with a staggered entry. This enables the children to become familiar with the routines and to develop their relationships both with other children and the staff. This time is also used to gather assessments and to support the children individually.

For more information about admissions please refer to the Lighthouse Schools Partnership Admissions Arrangements available on the school website.

# Continuing success through the school

## Transition

At St Peter's Primary School we believe that a smooth transition from Reception to Year One is important for a child's next steps in their school life. Reception and Year One class teachers work closely together in Term 6 to begin this process. We prepare Reception pupils by:

- Providing opportunities where possible for the new class teacher to spend time observing and getting to know pupils within their existing environment;
- Having a 'meet the teacher' session where pupils formally meet their teacher, in their new classroom before the end of their Reception year;
- Having circle time to allow children time to ask questions about the year ahead;
- Altering the style of teaching and learning gradually, to familiarise pupils with a more formal approach to learning.
- Providing a parent meeting in Term 6 of Reception.

## ***Monitoring and review***

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The EYFS Leader together with the Headteacher will monitor the performance of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The phase leader will provide annual feedback to the Standards & Curriculum Committee, raising any issues that require discussion. In addition the Headteacher will set appropriate targets for the children at the start of each year with the EYFS Leader and will report to the Committee on progress being made towards them.

***This Policy was first approved by LGB in July 2018.***

**Approved by:** Local Governing Body

**Date:** 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021

**Last reviewed on:** 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020 and 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021 by LGB and 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021 by SLT.

**Next review due by:** December 2022