



St. Paul's Dorking

Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Inspiring Learning, Nurturing Wholeness

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Policy date: February 2023

Review date: February 2025

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build their schooling. It is a holistic approach to education that encompasses all learning and development.

At St. Paul's, our two Reception classes operate a free flow system during most of the day where children can access both classrooms in their child-led play.

Both classes are staffed by a qualified teacher and teaching and learning assistant. Where necessary, additional adults may be required to support children with special educational needs.

All learning is differentiated to meet the needs of the individual child.

Aims

The EYFS aims to provide children with a positive, successful, enjoyable and developmentally appropriate learning experience, in a safe and secure environment. We seek to develop children's self-confidence and independence along with increasing their respect for themselves and others.

We value children's social, emotional and physical development as well as their intellectual growth and set high standards for the learning and development of each child.

We deliver a curriculum which inspires learning through play and encourages both child and adult initiated activities in an inclusive educational setting which values the whole child.

We seek to enable every child to flourish, using our school vision and values to underpin all we do.

Early Years Framework

The [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(2021\)](#) seeks to provide a set of common principles and commitments to support practitioners in delivering quality early education and childcare experiences to all children.

The framework is for all Ofsted registered early years providers in all settings, including:

- nurseries
- childminders
- pre-schools
- Reception

This statutory framework was reviewed and revised for September 2021 and were made to:

- improve outcomes at age 5, particularly in early language and literacy
- reduce workload such as unnecessary paperwork, so you can spend more time with the children in your care

At St. Paul's the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation stage is implemented alongside the use of [Development Matters \(Non-Statutory Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage\) July 2021](#). The Early Years curriculum is centred on 3 prime areas of learning:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

Schools must also support children's learning across these specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Educational activities relate to these seven areas which address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development.

Early Reading and Writing

At St. Paul's we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach phonics and reading through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Reception and follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression](#) document, which ensures children build their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through the school.

We also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Good Level of Development

The Government has set out how a Good Level of Development (GLD) is to be used as a measure of children's achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children are defined as having reached a good level of development at the end of the EYFS if they have achieved:

- a) the expected level in the early learning goals within the prime areas of learning (personal, social, emotional and physical development, communication and language) and
- b) the early learning goals in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy. (See Observation and Assessment)

Learning through Play

The EYFS curriculum enables learning to take place through both child and adult initiated play. It is important that children are able to access this whole range of opportunities, as they learn from watching and imitating others as well as by exploring and experimenting.

At St. Paul's we recognise that young children learn best when they are active and engaged in self-motivated pursuits based on their own interest. Play supports children in all areas of development as it can be adapted to suit a child's preferred learning style and encourage them to cultivate their own skills and concepts.

Learning outdoors is of equal importance as it gives children space for movement and supports both gross and fine motor development. It also provides opportunities to develop confidence, independence, active learning, cooperative play and risk taking.

Observation & Assessment

Observation involves looking at and listening to children in order to find out:

- a) how they are developing,
- b) what they like doing and
- c) what they are learning through their play and the experiences they are offered.

As each child has their own set of abilities the starting point is always with the child.

Regular observation and assessment of a child's learning and development is performed primarily through

practitioner observation, both formal and informal. This provides practitioners with a foundation upon which to build children's interests and participation and to scaffold learning to support a child to reach the next steps in their development. Observations take place on a regular basis as part of daily routines.

Every child attending St. Paul's EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) will have an individual learning journal, which will build up a record of their experiences and learning during their time in Reception.

Learning journals will consist of observations and photos. This supports EYFS staff to record and track children's progress and to identify any needs along with their next learning steps in line with the [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(2021\)](#) and [Development Matters \(Non-Statutory Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage\) July 2021](#)

Parents/carers are encouraged to share 'Magic Moments' with staff which can be added to their child's learning journal. This helps to create a fully holistic view of the child, to build a joint picture of a child's learning and achievement and to strengthen the school's partnership with parents/carers.

In line with the [Statutory Framework for the Early Years \(September 2021\)](#), Early Years staff at St. Paul's Primary school administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) at the beginning of the Reception year and then complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) at the end of the Reception year.

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

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. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1. The Profile must reflect practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child is assessed against the early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development (expected)
- Not yet reaching expected levels (emerging)

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are actively encouraged to participate in their children's education and to provide specific feedback on their children. This feedback helps practitioners to respond more effectively to children's needs.

Interaction with parents/carers is facilitated through face to face and online/virtual parents' consultation evenings, assemblies, 'Magic Moments' in learning journals, workshops, newsletters, website and participation in educational visits.

At St. Paul's we always welcome parent/carer input.

Admissions and Induction

All Nursery children and their parents/carers meet their new teacher ahead of the child's start date through an online meeting or home visit.

Children undergo an initial settling in period. The length and timing of the settling in period is determined by the Nursery teacher according to the individual needs of a child.

All new entrants to Reception and their parents/carers have the opportunity to meet with their class teacher in the summer term prior to the academic year in which they will start school. They then meet their new class teacher ahead of the child's start date in September through an online/face-to-face meeting. Children are given individual start times and dates in order to facilitate a staggered entry which supports children settling in and allows teachers to get to know individual children and their needs.

St. Paul's staff carry out transition meetings and visits for those children who have attended other settings prior to starting Reception.

Transition from Reception to Year 1

Reception and Year 1 teachers work together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

- YR practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer term, encouraging less dependence on adult support.
- Reception children meet Year 1 teachers during assemblies, playtimes and other whole school activities.
- An EYFS Profile end of year class summary is passed on to Year 1 teachers,
- YR teachers moderate writing samples with Y1 in the Summer term.
- YR and Y1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July.
- Year 1 teachers visit both YR classrooms to meet the children several times during the second half of the Summer term.
- Reception children visit their new Y1 class and teacher for several story sessions and an hour session in July.
- There is a similar structure to the school day during the Autumn Term when the children move into Y1
- Where possible, the Y1 children continue to enjoy practical learning experiences which gradually becomes more formalised towards the end of the academic year.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

At St. Paul's Primary School, we are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children. The school actively encourages children to respect and value different cultures. Learning materials are available to allow children to explore different cultures.

Children with a non-English home language are encouraged to use this with their peers and other adults in the unit wherever possible. We support all children to feel valued, confident and have high self-esteem. Children will have equal access to all learning opportunities, regardless of their gender, race or religion.

Many children benefit from short or long term interventions to support their emotional/behavioural development, physical or cognitive difficulties. Additional support is provided for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Where a child is deemed to have SEND, a Pathway Plan can be put in place to support their needs. Some children may require additional or different support for a short period of time; this is implemented following discussion with parents.

St. Paul's Primary School is committed to enriching pupils' school experience and to ensure that all pupils have equal access to high quality teaching and learning, and extra-curricular opportunities. At every opportunity, we strive to ensure all children achieve well: academically, socially and emotionally. We ensure high quality teaching and learning to meet the needs of all our children.