



St John the Baptist CEVA Primary School

EYFS Policy

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United we strive for excellence-together we shine
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Our School Vision

Together we are a caring community of ambitious learners, curious to explore the wider world, guided by Christian beliefs and values. As unique individuals we celebrate diversity and support one another in our difference.

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Introduction

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at St John the Baptist Primary School. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the EYFS setting. This document should be read in conjunction with the school's Behaviour Policy and our guide for new parents, which are available from our school office.

In the EYFS setting at St John the Baptist Primary School we aim to support each child's welfare, Learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special-let your light shine!
- Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences in play, which reflect children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them.
- Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and emotional intelligence required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions different to their own.
- Providing experiences, which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order

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to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.

- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

Teaching in the EYFS setting at St John the Baptist Primary School is delivered in accordance with the Government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (March 2021). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments with support from adults' and 'Children Learn in Different Ways and at Different Rates'

The curriculum is centered on 3 prime areas of learning:

1. Communication and Language.
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Providers must also support activities through four specific areas, which strengthen the prime areas. These are:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding of the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

These areas of Learning and Development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all areas of learning and development are all closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centered curriculum, which allows children to make links between what they are learning.

At St John the Baptist Primary School, as the children move through their Reception Year, the EYFS framework allows a natural progression and focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge that help the children to prepare for Year 1.

Active learning through Play

At St John the Baptist Primary School, we recognise that play is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas; understanding and language and can be adapted to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

In the EYFS setting at St John the Baptist Primary School, children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play, which is guided by adults, both in the classroom and outside. These activities are designed to support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding.

Drawing club and story dough

In our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), we incorporate Greg Bottrill's Drawing Club and Story Dough as part of our approach to nurture children's creativity, early writing, and storytelling skills. Drawing Club encourages imaginative thinking by allowing children to explore stories and ideas through drawing, which supports the development of fine motor skills and the foundations for writing. Story Dough, a playful approach using dough to create characters and scenes, further enhances children's ability to express themselves and build narrative skills. These methods inspire a love of storytelling, promote language development, and offer a fun, engaging way for children to develop the confidence and skills needed for early literacy.

Outdoor learning

In our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), outdoor play is central to our vision, as we believe that children learn best when they are curious and free to explore the wider world around them. We embrace the "no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing" approach, ensuring that outdoor learning is a regular and integral part of the day, regardless of the season. This enables children to develop resilience, adaptability, and a deep connection with nature. Through outdoor play, they engage in hands-on exploration, problem-solving, and risk-taking, which fosters their physical, social, and cognitive development. By providing opportunities to investigate the world around them, we nurture their curiosity, independence, and readiness for future learning.

Curriculum

In our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), we follow a two-year rolling curriculum designed to align with Key Stage 1 (KS1), providing children with a strong foundation for future learning. This approach ensures that children are introduced to key concepts and experiences that will support their transition into KS1 and beyond. By revisiting themes and topics in KS1, we give children the opportunity to build on prior knowledge, deepening their understanding and giving them experiences to "hook" new learning onto. This helps develop essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication, creating a solid foundation for their academic and personal growth in future learning stages.

Assessment and Recording

The statutory Reception Baseline Assessment is carried out in the first six weeks in which the children start reception. Further judgments are made on the children's current stage of development during this period using 'Development Matters' as non-statutory guidance to support these judgements. This builds an on-entry assessment of their learning requirements and subsequent assessment throughout the year.

Ongoing assessment throughout the school day is an essential part of the learning and development process at St John the Baptist Primary School as it plays an important part in helping recognise progress, understand needs, abilities, interests and learning styles, and to plan activities and support. Through practitioners' observations of children leading their own play and in play guided by adults within different contexts, teaching and learning is adapted to reflect the children's knowledge and progress. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress. A record of children's learning progression in all areas of learning and development is recorded.

At the end of the reception year, practitioners complete the EYFS profile for each child. Children are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

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

The results of the profile are shared with parents/carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally

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and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Planning

The children's learning and development opportunities are planned using the 'Development Matters' document and EYFS framework as guidance to form long and medium term planning. Practitioner's observations of the children's interests, current knowledge and skills, further shape learning activities planned and are continuously adapted as a result of the observations made. All areas of learning and development are planned for and available to access within the setting throughout each week. The learning opportunities are provided through a mix of children leading their own play and by taking part in play, which is guided by adults both in the classroom and outside. We aim to provide rich and varied environments, both indoor and outdoor, which allow children to feel safe and secure yet confident to try new things and take risks.

Educational visits, within the local community and further afield, themed days and visitors to the school, including parents, are also planned to support children's learning within the classroom.

Parents are partners

At St John the Baptist Primary School, we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. Therefore, practitioners endeavor to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents, through home visits and induction meetings at the start of the year, informal chats at the beginning and end of the day, the sharing of WOW moments through Class Dojo. These opportunities are aimed at encouraging parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes) and supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through a weekly summary of class activities and a constant feed on Class Dojo. Class Dojo also provides parents with another method of communication with the class teacher. Whole school newsletters are also sent home weekly.

Parents are invited to attend Parents' Evenings during the course of the academic year.

The first of these takes place during the autumn term to allow practitioners and parents to discuss how children have settled into the setting. The Parent's Evening during the spring term focuses upon children's learning and development progress. In the summer term, reports detailing their EYFS profile are completed by teachers and are sent home to parents and discussed with Year 1 teachers.

Other opportunities for practitioners to share children's learning and development with parents take the form of:

- Termly learning together sessions
- Weekly Mystery reader
- Weekly show and tell-sharing their individual skills and knowledge

Parents are also invited to get involved with school life helping with educational visits, as well as offering their individual skills and knowledge (e.g. cooking, art, music) to support children's learning.

Admissions

The criteria for admissions can be found in our Admissions Policy on our website.

Induction

Induction takes place during June or July. An information pack is sent to parents, which outlines details of the induction process and dates and arrangements for the beginning of term. Prior to the children starting school, they are invited to spend sessions with us when they will spend time in the classroom with their prospective teacher, experiencing a range of activities that will be on offer when they start school. Parents are invited to a family picnic session to meet the school community. Class teachers will also offer a home visit so that their teacher can meet the children in their home environment. Parents are invited to an evening presentation outlining the aims of the school, the curriculum and day-to-day routines.

The class teacher will liaise with local pre-schools in order to support the children's transition between settings. In order that the children settle into St John the Baptist School life smoothly and happily, they are invited to attend full days or part time up until October half term. At the end of this period, parents are invited to a meeting to discuss their child attending full time, if they are not doing so.

Equal Opportunities

All practitioners at St John the Baptist Primary School have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the EYFS setting. All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS setting at St John the Baptist Primary School.

Please refer to our school Equality Plan on our website for further information.

Special Educational Needs

Please refer to the Special Educational Needs Policy on our website.

Health and Safety

Inspections of the setting are carried out on a termly basis by the Health and Safety Officer and termly by a member of our Senior Leadership Team and a governor. Procedures for Health and Safety are outlined in The Code of Practice No.25, which is located in the school office. Please also refer to our Health and Safety policy on our website.

Safeguarding within Early Years Settings

Please see our School Safeguarding Policy

As an Early Years Provider delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the School aims to meet the specific safeguarding and child protection duties set out in the Childcare Act 2006 and related statutory guidance. The School will ensure that children in EYFS are able to learn and develop and are kept safe and healthy so that they are ready for school by providing a safe, secure learning environment that safeguards and promotes their welfare, and takes appropriate action where there are child protection concerns.

All safeguarding and child protection policies within the School apply equally to children in the EYFS so far as they are relevant to that age group.

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