



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

St Michael's Easthampstead CE Primary School

At St Michael's we are a community of active learners who go above and beyond in everything we do, equipping ourselves to make a difference in our own lives and in the lives of others

Policy Name	EYFS policy
Brief Description:	Outlines the school's approach to providing the Early Years curriculum, assessment and other procedures.
Status: Statutory/non-statutory	Non- Statutory
Other related policies and procedures:	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy SEND Policy Behaviour Policy Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy Health and Safety Policy Attendance Policy Intimate Care Policy Equality Information and Objectives Complaints Policy
Approval level: HT/Governors/FGB	FGB
Approved by the Governing Board on:	14/7/2026
Frequency to be reviewed	Every 2 years
Latest Date for Next Review:	14/7/2028
Version + Schedule of Amendments:	3
Signed:	Shaun Riordan
Position:	Headteacher
Date of Signature:	14/7/2026

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1. Aims

At St Michael's we believe that every child deserves an exceptional start to their education. We provide a safe, nurturing and inspiring environment where children develop independence, curiosity and a lifelong love of learning through high-quality relationships, purposeful play and carefully planned teaching. This aligns to our school vision and values: *we are a community of active learners who go above and beyond in everything we do, equipping ourselves to make a difference in our own lives and in the lives of others.*

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2025 EYFS Statutory Framework](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

St Michael's admits a cohort of 30 into the Reception year group in September each year.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2024 statutory framework of the EYFS.

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

4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, during the Autumn term practitioners focus strongly on the 3 prime areas along with phonics and reading.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. We are committed to providing an inclusive environment where every child can thrive. Early identification of additional needs enables staff to provide appropriate support through quality first teaching, reasonable adjustments and, where appropriate, targeted interventions. We work closely with parents, the SENCO and external professionals to ensure children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) receive the support they need to achieve their full potential.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and develop and include these in their practice.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-led activities. Practitioners 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, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning and are increasingly supported to develop the knowledge, skills and independence required for Year 1.

High-quality interactions, vocabulary development, sustained shared thinking and purposeful conversation underpin all learning across the curriculum, highlighting the importance of language and communication skills. Practitioners model rich vocabulary, engage children in high-quality conversations and use purposeful questioning to extend thinking and develop communication skills. Storytelling, songs, rhymes and carefully chosen texts play a central role in developing children's language, confidence and love of learning.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum. Children experience high-quality story times, repeated reading of carefully selected texts and systematic synthetic phonics from the beginning of Reception.

Children learn about the diverse world around them through books, discussion, celebrations and experiences that reflect modern Britain.

Children have daily access to a well-planned outdoor learning environment which is recognised as an extension of the classroom. Outdoor provision promotes physical development, exploration, creativity, communication and problem-solving, enabling children to develop confidence, resilience and independence through a wide range of practical experiences.

4.3 Characteristics of Effective Learning

At St Michael's, we recognise that how children learn is just as important as what they learn. Our curriculum and provision promote the three Characteristics of Effective Learning identified within the EYFS framework:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate, explore and develop confidence through first-hand experiences.
- Active Learning – children develop resilience, concentration and enjoyment as they persevere and celebrate their achievements.
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children are encouraged to develop their own ideas, make links in their learning and solve problems independently and collaboratively.

Practitioners plan experiences that encourage these characteristics across all areas of learning.

5. Assessment

At St Michael's Easthampstead, 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. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

When children start reception, the adults complete the reception baseline assessment with them.

The Reception Baseline Assessment is carried out in accordance with DfE guidance within the first six weeks of children starting Reception, regardless of when they join the class, unless they have been assessed previously.

The assessment consists of areas such as: early number, early calculation (early addition/subtraction), mathematical language, early understanding of pattern, early vocabulary, phonological awareness and early comprehension.

The purpose of the reception baseline assessment is to provide an on-entry assessment of pupil attainment to be used as a starting point from which a cohort-level progress measure to the end of key stage 2 (KS2) can be created.

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 or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

Assessment is primarily formative and is used to inform high-quality teaching and learning. Practitioners make ongoing professional judgements through observations, interactions and discussions with children to identify next steps in learning. Assessment is proportionate, meaningful and supports children to make sustained progress without creating unnecessary workload.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. Termly parents' evenings and the EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home.

Tapestry is used to communicate with parents and share children's learning and experiences in school. Parents receive regular curriculum information through newsletters and the school website.

Parents are invited in to school to support in the classroom and to attend family learning sessions.

Our SENCO assists families who are in need of extra support.

7. Transition

We place great importance on effective transition into school for children coming from nurseries, child minders, pre-schools and those children who have not attended a previous setting. In June we host an evening meeting for parents and carers (children are welcome) to introduce them to our school setting, outline the ethos and routines of our Reception class and allow them to look around the setting and speak to Reception staff.

Throughout the summer term, the EYFS lead visits nurseries, child minders and pre-schools to see the children in their familiar setting and talk to their key worker about their development, interests and needs.

In July, the children are invited for one of two morning sessions with one half of their new cohort to familiarise themselves with the classroom and begin to get to know the adults who will be caring for them.

In September, Reception staff undertake home visits which allow parents to ask any questions and

for the children to re-familiarise them with the Reception staff.

Throughout the summer term Reception and Year 1 staff work closely together to ensure a smooth transition. Children visit the Year 1 classroom, staff share assessment information and curriculum planning, and support is tailored to individual pupils where necessary.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy. The safety and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework to ensure children are safe, healthy and able to learn.

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures, including child protection, safer recruitment, attendance, health and safety, first aid, intimate care, risk assessments, educational visits and online safety, are set out in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and other related policies. All staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities for keeping children safe.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Headteacher (or delegated senior leader with responsibility for EYFS) and approved by the Governing Board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy