St Francis
C of E Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Version Number	V2
Date Adopted by Governors	June 2026
Scheduled Review Date	May 2027
Statutory or Best Practice Policy	Statutory
School or Trust Policy	School

We want to ensure that your needs are met.
If you would like this information in any other format, please contact us on 01637 303106 or email info@kernowlearning.co.uk.

#AsOne
KernowLearning

Introduction

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up."

('Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' March 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers the development of children from birth to the end of their Reception Year. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We follow the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**.

A Unique Child

At St Francis School our Christian vision is that *every person matters, every person helps, every person succeeds* so that each of us can live *'life in all its fullness'* (John 10:10). We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We know that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their school and home environments and we begin to build links with their families.

We observe how each child learns to gain an understanding of the characteristics they develop in order to become effective learners. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem.

During their first year at school, the children are introduced to the learning habits. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, co-operative and to use reasoning. Children begin to understand the concept of the growth mindset. They are taught that they can 'grow their brains' so that they understand that everyone can learn with practice and effort. The children are taught how to learn and how to become successful learners.

In our school we believe that all our children matter and help all our children to achieve their best. This

includes boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.

We also aim to:

- use a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- provide a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- provide a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- use resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- plan challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitor children's progress and take action to provide support.

It is important to us that all children are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. 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.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.
(See our Child Protection and *Safeguarding Policy*)

Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Special Needs

The Early Years Foundation Stage is taught in accordance with the present policy for Equal Opportunities. Children are encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards people of different ethnic groups, cultures, beliefs, gender and ability. We support the belief that everyone is unique in their own right and act upon it.

Ramps and a disabled toilet are available within the school to cater for children with physical disabilities.

Our curriculum respects a child's ethnic faith and cultural heritage, and the special needs of each child, by ensuring that these areas are covered within our indoor and outdoor activities, circle time and assemblies, visitors, role play, books and positive images.

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that we identify and help those children in our care with additional educational needs including gifted children. We liaise with the school's SENDCO to identify next steps in learning in partnership with the parents.
(See *SEND Policy* and *Equal Opportunities Policy*)

Welfare

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

At St Francis School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children;
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so;
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose;
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs;
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children;
- comply with the Trusts policies on use of images and storing them securely.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

Children grow in confidence and independence as a result of building secure, trusted relationships with EYFS staff. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We do this by:

- gathering information from parents about their child as their child starts our school;
- inviting both children and their parents to stay and play sessions, to spend a few afternoons with their teacher in their classroom before starting at school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- encouraging parents to attend parents' evenings in the first two terms to discuss their child's progress;
- providing parents with a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the midpoint in school year;

- providing parents with regular updates, photographs and video clips via an online platform – Class Dojo. Informing them about learning and activities their child has participated in.
- encouraging parents to share their own observations and comment on their child's progress at home via the online platform.
- sharing our approach to the teaching of phonics and reading;
- inviting parents to curriculum drop in sessions where key information is explained;
- sharing our half termly curriculum aims and providing some suggestions for parents to engage with at home;
- providing parents with weekly Phonics and Topic based home learning opportunities for their child.

Staff develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. We encourage parents to talk to the child's key person, if there are any concerns.

Enabling Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

At St Francis School we place the individual child at the centre of our planning. This is achieved through detailed observation and assessment. This observation and on-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years practice.

We achieve this through:

- observing children as they act and interact in their play, everyday activities, child-initiated activities and planned activities, and learning about what the child does at home;
- observing what children can do, and identifying their stage on their developmental pathway;
- considering ways to support the child to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development;
- considering the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in our care. This information is then effectively used to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

The EYFS requires us to undertake summative assessments in which staff review children's progress and share a summary with parents at the end of the foundation stage through the EYFS Profile.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, we complete the EYFS profile for each child. The profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a clear picture of a child's development, knowledge, understanding and abilities, as well as their progress against expected levels. Furthermore, it informs Year One teachers of individual children's readiness, needs and next steps. The teacher will determine whether the child is meeting the expected levels, exceeding them or below expected levels of development. The child's level of development is assessed against the seventeen Early Learning Goals.

In compliance with Early Years regulations parents may have access to developmental records about their child.

The Learning Environment

The setting is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are several areas where children can choose to be either active or quiet and restful. The unit is set up to help the children to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales. Children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan outdoor activities and provide specific resources that enable the children to develop in all seven areas of learning.

Learning and Development

Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

Teaching and Learning Style

- We use a range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- A carefully planned curriculum helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS.
- Children take part in activities that build on, and extend, their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- Children are encouraged to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.
- Learning needs are supported with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space and equipment.
- We identify progress and future learning needs of children through observations.

Play

Through high quality, play led learning experiences our children explore and develop well; these experiences enable the children to better make sense of the world. Adults model play and also play sensitively with the children, seamlessly fitting in with their plans and ideas. The children are encouraged to try new activities and judge risks for themselves. We talk to them about how we get better at things through effort and practice, that we can all learn when things go wrong. They practice and build up ideas, learning how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own.

Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions, this provides a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the unit to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

Children learn skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate their understanding through the seven areas of learning and development.

The *prime* areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

The *specific* areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world and
- Expressive arts and design

The prime areas are those most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning. As they grow, these skills will support the child as they extend their development in the specific areas. None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated learning activities.

The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are already implicitly embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We promote these values through our school mission statement, aims and values, our curriculum and enrichment activities.

Transition

From Pre-school /Feeder settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition.

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.
- Parents are offered a home visit before children start school.
- The children are invited to visit their Reception class for a few afternoon sessions to meet their new classmates and teacher.

- EYFS teachers endeavour to visit children at their pre-school setting and/or speak with each child's Key Person within their setting.
- Children requiring extra support will be offered additional visits regardless of their setting.
- Children receive a school pack about their new school, including photos of staff that will be caring for them and their new classroom. The pack also includes a letter from their Year 5 buddy, introducing themselves and welcoming them to the school.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of learning activities in Year 1.

Role of the EYFS Lead

The role of the EYFS Lead is to provide professional leadership for the Early Years in order to facilitate the highest standards of teaching and learning and to secure effective use of resources.

This will involve:

- monitoring of pupil progress
- pupil conferencing
- analysing data
- taking the lead in policy development
- auditing, purchasing and organising resources
- supporting colleagues in their CPD
- keeping up to date with recent developments in the area
- checking that assessment of the EYFSP is carried out in line with the school's Assessment Policy and statutory requirements
- liaising with, and informing, the school's Senior Leadership Team about provision, pupil progress, welfare and any concerns

Monitoring and Review

The EYFS will be monitored in line with the School Development Plan by the EYFS Lead in the first instance. The EYFS team regularly discuss EYFS practice, providing feedback to the EYFS Lead and the Headteacher / Deputy Head/ SLT, raising any issues that require discussion. Work scrutiny by curriculum subject leaders will take place on a termly basis. A two-year rolling programme of rigorous monitoring of the curriculum is in place.