



St. John's Church of England VA Primary School
Finding the light in ourselves and each other
Inspired by the Gospel according to John (chapter 8, verse 12)

An aspirational school that encourages every child regardless of their background to 'soar on wings like eagles' in their learning and personal development (Isaiah 40:31)

Early Years Policy

Approved By:	Quality of Education Committee
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*A truly inclusive school that is built upon the values of
Hope - Joy - Love - Forgiveness - Faith - Goodness*



St. John's Church of England VA Primary School

Our Priorities

At St. John's Church of England VA Primary School (St. John's) we aim to provide every child with the skills to become a happy, independent and curious lifelong learner so that they can 'find the light in themselves and each other.' Our priority is that our provision provides a high level of engagement and active learning through a range of skill-based activities, which in turn supports children in having aspirations and as per our learning statement, to 'soar on wings like an eagle.'

Our Principle

At St. John's we believe that every child deserves a firm foundation in their early years. We aim to make a significant contribution to that start by helping young children develop a love for learning which they will carry with them through life and enable them to have the best possible future life chances.

'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.'

(Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, 1st September 2021).

This is achieved through implementing our school values and learning powers, which support a positive mindset and positive attitudes towards learning.

The Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage states four guiding principles which should shape practice in the early years, these are:

- 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 with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- learning and development is important. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.15). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment underpins learning and development across all areas. Adults and the considered use of the environment supports the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. At St. John's we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all of our children, thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning and well-being.

We aim to follow St. John's policies and procedures within EYFS. In particular, we focus on healthy eating at an early stage for children and encourage parents to follow the healthy eating and drinking, nut allergy awareness and packed-lunch policy.



Our EYFS Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the EYFS statutory framework implemented in September 2021. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. 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 four **specific** areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive arts and design

Enabling Environments

At St. John's we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The role of both the indoor and outdoor environment provides opportunities for child-initiated activities reflecting the topic where they can develop gross motor skills, social skills etc. We provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways.

Both EYFS settings are carefully planned to ensure all areas are used to enable learning for every child. The children have the choice of where they choose to learn. All activities are based upon current assessment, and all have a main learning intention that can be accessed with and without adult support.

Our basic provision is linked to the age-related expectations of the cohort. We encourage child-initiated activities and adapt our continuous provision accordingly. We enhance our provision through objects, prompts, conversation and questioning.

Planning

We use the guidance statements in *Development Matters* (DfE July 2021) and *Birth to 5 Matters* (Early Years Coalition 2021), to identify next steps for each child to deepen, challenge and extend their learning. During planning sessions, discussion takes place to ensure activities allow for Characteristics of Effective Learning to be demonstrated and embedded.

Medium Term Plans are written half termly and used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning. These are subject to change according to cohort interests. Pre-planned sessions with the children are timetabled into the week prior to starting a new topic.



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Activities based on skills may be led by EYFS practitioners within the indoor and outdoor classrooms. These activities let learning happen through creative opportunities, a supportive environment and a sound pedagogical understanding.

Appropriate resources in the EYFS environment are stimulating and relevant. The resources are provided to create rich learning opportunities through a range of highly structured, adult led, child led or child-initiated learning.

Child-initiated activities may be instigated when the child brings something to the setting this might lead to the provision of resources, stories and pictures to support this interest.

A whole class focus is linked to activities within the EYFS setting. These are adapted continuously to meet the needs of the unique child. Attention to children's adaptation of activities is encouraged and creates extended learning opportunities.

Children are encouraged to challenge themselves through self-selecting tasks and activities. The activities offer opportunities for extended learning and are structured to develop their learning.

Planning takes into account children with individual needs in line with the Inclusion policy.

Assessment

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of our effective early years practice. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of short written or photographic online observations and involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.

At St. John's we use the government baseline and carry out assessments within in the first few weeks of school. This assessment will inform us of the cohorts' emotional needs, as well as academic level at point of entry. This information is analysed within our EYFS team as well as being shared with the Senior Leadership Team. The Early Years team track the progression of each child throughout the academic year.

We ensure our end of EYFS assessments are reliable through:

1. Our knowledge of the child, gained through observation and interaction.
2. Our environment, enabling the child to flourish to their full capacity.
3. Our assessments, to ensure a range of contributors e.g. parents, SENCo, other relevant adults.
4. Moderation across EYFS team.
5. Moderation with Nursery and Year 1 teachers.

Parents and carers are given the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher twice a year in a formal consultation evening and receive a written report and their Early Learning Goal attainment at the end of the academic year. More informally we meet with parents throughout the school year as and when necessary to discuss their child's particular needs.



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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:

- 'On track' to meet the expected levels of development by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- 'Not on track' to reach the expected levels of development by the end of Foundation Stage.

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

Transition into Year 1

For there to be a clear and positive transition into Year 1 we start the process in the Summer term with opportunities to visit the Year 1 classroom and for the new teacher to meet the Reception class. Parents of SEND children are invited to an individual meeting so that they can be introduced to their next teacher and discuss ways to support their child. In July we have several sessions where the children explore the classroom environment and join in with whole school activities. In September the children will have moved into their new class with the continuous provision by learning through play is introduced alongside more formal Year 1 routines. This should help them to feel confident and excited about their new environment and curriculum. It is important to get this transition right for the children to flourish and grow as learners.

Inclusion

All children and their families are valued within our school. We value the diversity of individuals and do not discriminate because of differences. All children at St. John's are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion or stage of learning. We do not group children based on notions of fixed ability. We teach the children that practice and effort lead to learning and improvement. Teachers plan activities that enable all children to access the learning and to achieve as highly as possible. In EYFS the children begin to learn to take responsibility for their learning and begin to understand the concept of challenge.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. Planning for children with additional needs is completed in liaison with the school's Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator.

In the EYFS we have realistic and challenging expectations and meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests and develop their self-esteem and confidence through a creative curriculum and learning environment
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities and environments to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which each child's contribution is valued
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary



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It is vital that all children in the school are safe. Within our nurturing environment we provide children with opportunities to help them develop the skills they need to keep themselves safe. Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards both in the real and the virtual world.

Working in Partnership

We recognise that children learn to be confident and independent through the development of secure relationships. Staff develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. We develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

We recognise the important role parents and carers play in educating the children. We do this by:

1. Talking to parents/carers about their child before their child starts at our school.
2. Visiting the child at home or in their Preschool/Nursery setting.
3. Inviting the children to spend time with their teacher in the classroom before starting at school.
4. Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
5. Encouraging parents to attend parent's evenings in the first two terms to discuss their child's progress.
6. Encouraging parents/carers to share their children's home achievements by contributing to Tapestry.
7. Inviting parents/carers to a curriculum meeting where our approach to reading and teaching phonics is explained.
8. Providing parents/carers with a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

Safeguarding

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Statement.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team every three years and at every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.



Tapestry Policy

Aims

St. John's ensures that all children in the EYFS have an online personal journal which records photos, observations, comments and assessments, to build up a record of each child's achievements during their time with us. This evidence is used alongside their Learning Journals which track each child's individual progress throughout our EYFS.

Procedures

St. John's uses an online Learning Journal system (Tapestry), allowing staff and parents to access the information from any computer via a personal, password-protected login.

Staff access allows input of new observations, photos and assessments or amendment of existing observations and photos.

Parent access allows input of new observations and photos or the addition of comments on existing observations and photos – parent logins do not have the necessary permission to edit existing material.

Observations inputted into the Tapestry system will be approved by a manager before being added to the child's Learning Journal.

Parents logging into the system are only able to see their own child's journal. Parents are asked to sign a consent form giving permission for their child's image to appear in other children's journals, and to protect images of other children that may appear in any photos contained in their child's journal.

The journal is started once the child has joined Nursery or Reception Year.

New observational entries to a child's journal will usually be uploaded within two weeks of the observation being made. Observations and updates to the journal will not occur every day that the child attends.

Tapestry is not used as a general communication tool between school and home. A child's journal is a document recording their learning and development and parents may add comments on observations or contribute photos, videos or information about activities they have been doing at home.

Parents must contact the school through the usual channels for any other day-to-day matters, e.g. absence, lost property, etc.



Security

The Tapestry online Learning Journal system is hosted on secure dedicated servers based in the UK. The server host takes security very seriously, both online and physically. You will notice that the 'https' prefix in the website address denotes that it is a 'secure' site.

Any photos taken on the school iPad will be uploaded into Tapestry periodically by the school staff and then deleted from any hardware. Media taken using the setting's iPad will be uploaded onto Tapestry and then deleted from the iPad periodically.

Access to information stored on Tapestry can only be gained by unique user I.D. and password.

Parents can only see their own child's information and are unable to login to view other children's journals.

Once a child leaves the Reception year, their learning journal will be downloaded onto a secure staff site. Parent access to Tapestry will be revoked immediately the child leaves EYFS.

If a member of staff leaves St. John's, their access to Tapestry will be revoked immediately and their details deleted from the system.

Parents must NOT upload any media from Tapestry onto social media sites.

Staff access

Staff (only those with full access - Managers and Teachers) may access Tapestry at home using their secure log-in.

Staff must ensure they do not save photographs from Tapestry onto their own personal laptop/tablets.

Staff must ensure they log out once they have finished.

Staff must not allow anyone in their family or home to access Tapestry



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Example of agreed guidelines and permission for accessing and using Tapestry 'Online Learning Journeys'

I give consent for photographs of _____ to be used on the Tapestry Online Learning Journeys.

At St. John's we are committed to complying with GDPR requirements, regarding information collected on school-based websites and apps. Therefore, please agree to the following guidelines:

As a parent/carer I will...

Not publish any of my child's observations, photographs, or videos on any social media site.

Keep the login details within my trusted family.

Speak to a member of staff if I experience any difficulties accessing my child's learning journey.

I agree to the guidelines:

Print name: _____

Name of child: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____



Early Years Policy Document Control

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