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Statutory:	Policy provided centrally for adoption by schools with minimal amendment to the core text. Changes are allowed to the text where indicated

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Approved by:	
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Adopted by school:	**St John's CE Primary School**
Date:	**September 2026**

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a secure foundation for learning, development and 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
- A close working partnership between staff and 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 Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework - GOV.UK, effective from 1 September 2025. This policy has regard to the Equality Act 2010.

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Structure of the EYFS

This policy describes how all ODST schools with children in the EYFS provision implement the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (Updated September 2025). It sets out ODST's approach to children's well-being, education and health to ensure that our youngest children have the best possible start to their time in school and can flourish.

The EYFS refers to children from birth to five years of age. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the full range of policies for ODST and statutory guidance on the EYFS.

4. Curriculum

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

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that we must teach. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important 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

We also support the children in 4 specific areas which help strengthen and develop the 3 prime areas, and ignite the children's curiosity and enthusiasm:

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

4.1 Planning

At St John's, our staff are ambitious for all children and plan activities and experiences for the children that enable them to develop and learn most effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the Early Learning Goals and Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Teachers have carefully planned the EYFS curriculum in order to give rich and varied opportunities for children to gain new skills and knowledge throughout the year in a child focused and practical way. Teachers carefully plan the provision that is available both indoor and outdoors so that these learning opportunities enrich what is taught during lessons and allow children to apply their new knowledge and skills daily.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests and development of each child in their care, and consider whether the child needs any additional support. They use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

Where a child may have a special educational need or disability (SEND), staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding the children's activities, staff reflect on the different rates at which children are developing, and take these into account.

4.2 Inclusion, Equality and Diversity

Our Trust values the individuality of all children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by considering the pupils' varied life experiences and needs. The achievements, attitudes and wellbeing of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that the school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. Staff teaching in the EYFS consider 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.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and adapt the practice and provision to meet the needs of all children, striving to create an inclusive environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

The school's SENCO and School Leaders work together closely with the Central Team to ensure that we meet the statutory requirements as laid out in the 'SEND Code of Practice' and relevant legislation. Our ODST SEN Policy and School's SEN Information Report contains more detail on how we achieve this, in relation to pupils with Special Educational Needs.

4.3 Teaching

Staff make sure that the children experience the 3 key characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring; active learning; and creating and thinking critically. The children's daily learning experience is balanced in two parts: both formal structured lesson inputs and informal play during continuous provision.

Staff respond quickly to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions. Where possible, teachers work with children either 1:1 or in very small groups to provide high quality, focused teaching input that allows children to learn quickly and confidently.

As the children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more focus on teaching essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning, to help the children prepare for Key Stage 1.

5. Assessment

At St John's, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their progress, development and interests. We record these observations of key milestones through the platform 'Evidence Me' that enables the learning journey of the child to be shared with the parents. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared and contributed by parents and/or carers and keep them up to date with the child's progress and development through the Evidence Me app. Staff will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

When a child is aged between 3 and 4, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas at both parent evening meetings and their end of year report. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed. It also focuses on any areas of possible concern, which may indicate a disability, special educational need or developmental delay. The progress check will describe the activities and strategies that the school intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns, involving parents and/or carers and other professionals as appropriate.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts Reception, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA). [The requirements for the RBA are set out in Annex B of EYFS statutory framework]

In the final term of the academic year in which the child reaches age 5, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child (before 30 June in that term). Each child is assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

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

We share the EYFS profile the child's Year 1 teacher. This helps to inform a discussion between reception and year 1 teachers about the child's stage of development and learning needs, and helps with planning activities in year 1.

The school shares the results of each child's 'progress check' and EYFS profile (but not the reception baseline assessment) with their parents and/or carers.

In exceptional circumstances, after discussion and only in agreement with parents and/or carers, a child might stay in EYFS provision beyond the end of the academic year in which they turn 5. In these exceptional cases, we will continue to assess the child throughout their time in EYFS provision and complete their profile at the end of the year before they move into Year 1.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. We submit EYFS profile data to the local authority on request.

6. Working with parents and carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's a strong partnership between our staff and each child's parents and/or carers. We keep parents and/or carers up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile help to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Key opportunities to understand your child's progress are through the Evidence Me app, during parent evening meetings and through end of year reporting.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to make sure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. This is usually either the class teacher or the Learning Support Assistant in each class. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The class teacher also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

We ask parents/carers to provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers for their child (where possible).

7. Staff

7.1 Staff training

We will:

- Train all staff in safeguarding procedures in line with Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance
- Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures
- Renew training every 2 years, or more often when it's needed to help maintain skills; keep up to date with any changes to our safeguarding procedures; or because of any safeguarding concerns
- Outline how training is delivered, and how staff are supported to put it in place, in our child protection and safeguarding policy [insert details on where to find this policy]

Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will:

- Provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to all staff
- Attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework
- Liaise as needed with local statutory children's services agencies and our local safeguarding partners

7.2 Safer recruitment

When recruiting staff, we will follow the procedures set out in the latest EYFS framework guidance on checking the suitability of new recruits, including:

- Obtaining a reference for any member of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references

See ODST Safer recruitment Policy.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We recognise that 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. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

All practitioners are alert to any issues of concern in children's lives at home or elsewhere.

8.1 Whistleblowing

We make sure that all staff are aware of our whistleblowing procedures; feel able to raise concerns about any poor or unsafe practice; and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

In the event that a member of staff feels that they need to blow the whistle on misconduct, they should report their concern to the [headteacher/other member of staff]. If the concern is about the [headteacher/other member of staff], or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to Mr Rahul Karavdra email via Governance professional at: clerk.gov@stjohns.reading.sch.uk

See ODST Whistleblowing Policy

8.2 Staffing ratios

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff:child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

- For children aged under 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 3 children.
- For children aged 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 5 children
- For children aged 3 and over:
    - Where there is a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, or early years teacher status, an instructor or another suitably-qualified, overseas-trained teacher:
        - For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 30 children
        - For all other classes, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
    - At least 1 other member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status
    - Where a person with the above qualifications is not working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children
        - At least 1 member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status
        - At least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification
    - We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils
        - For mixed classes we determine ratios guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of the children within the group

8.3 Paediatric first aid (PFA)

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

8.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

We also have a DSL who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children. They are also responsible for:

- Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSPs (local safeguarding partners)
- Providing support, advice and guidance to all other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required
- Attending a safeguarding training course that complies with the criteria set out in annex C of the latest EYFS framework

8.5 Absence

We're required to promptly follow up on absences.

If a child is absent for a prolonged time or if their parents/carers haven't told us about the absence, we will attempt to contact the parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts.

See the ODST Attendance Policy for more information.

8.6 Oral health and tooth brushing

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by insert your approach here, for example by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

We allow opportunities for children to practice supervised toothbrushing in school when learning about oral health. We will inform parents of when and if this takes place. We follow Public Health England guidance on supervised toothbrushing to make sure that it is evidence-based and safe.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy, which can be found on the school website under the policies tab.

8.7 Safer eating, Nutrition, Food safety and Hygiene

The school is committed to promoting safe eating practices in line with EYFS requirements to safeguard children and minimise the risk of choking, allergic reactions, and other harm during food consumption. We recognise that mealtimes present potential risks, particularly for younger children. We therefore implement robust procedures to ensure that all food provided and consumed within the setting is appropriate, supervised, and managed safely.

The school is committed to promoting children's health, wellbeing and development through the provision of healthy, balanced and nutritious food and drink in a safe and supportive environment.

The school comply with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, which requires that: "Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious."

We also have regard to the EYFS Nutrition Guidance (2025)

See the ODST Safer Eating Policy and ODST Pupil Allergy Policy for more information.

8.9 Safe sleep

All staff must read NHS advice on Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) - NHS

Where the school provides care for children who sleep as part of the EYFS provision, it ensures that safe sleep practices are in place and followed consistently by all staff to reduce the risk of harm.

The school will:

- follow current national safer sleep guidance, including that babies are always placed on their backs to sleep, unless otherwise advised in writing by a medical professional;
- ensure that children sleep in a clear, safe sleep space with no pillows, duvets, cot bumpers, soft toys, or loose bedding;
- use appropriate bedding and sleep equipment that meets safety standards;
- maintain a comfortable room temperature and monitor children appropriately while sleeping;
- ensure sleeping children are checked regularly and that these checks are recorded where required;
- never leave sleeping children unsupervised;
- work in partnership with parents/carers to understand and, where appropriate, follow a child's established sleep routines, while ensuring these routines are consistent with safe sleep guidance;
- complete individual risk assessments where a child has specific medical or developmental needs affecting sleep;
- ensure all staff working with babies and young children are trained in safer sleep practices and understand their safeguarding responsibilities in this area.

Any concerns about a child's safety during sleep will be treated as a safeguarding matter and responded to in line with this policy.

See the ODST Safer Sleep Policy for more information.

8.10 Screen use

The school will follow the DfE guidance "Help for early years providers: Screen use, July 2026 that under-2s should have no screen time 'other than in exceptional circumstances such as a video call with parents and carers'; and 2 - 5s should have a maximum of one hour, preferably less.

8.11 Accident or injury

All accidents, injuries, and existing marks are recorded promptly and accurately and shared with parents/carers as appropriate. The school ensures that an appropriate number of staff with current paediatric first aid training are on site at all times in line with EYFS requirements. Any concerns about a child's injury are reported and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

8.12 Safety of premises

We make sure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor space, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children we care for and the activities provided on the premises.

We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including risk assessment, fire safety and hygiene requirements.

8.13 Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- Suitable and hygienic nappy changing facilities
- An adequate supply of necessary items such as clean bedding, towels and spare clothes
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

During nappy changes and toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs.

See ODST Intimate Care Policy

9. GDPR

We are committed to protecting your personal data and complying with the standards set by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). See school website for details and privacy notices.

See ODST Data Protection Policy and Data Retention Schedule and school website for Privacy Notices

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Trustees annually and adopted by the LGB.