

St Luke's R.C Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



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1. Aims

In the EYFS setting at St Luke's RC Primary School we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, spiritually, intellectually, and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential.

We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special, created in the image of God and ensuring that they are included and supported through equality or opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- 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 codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions differ to their own.
- Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development and providing a range of effective learning experiences in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning.
- Providing a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Ensuring quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Developing a close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

At St. Luke's RC our EYFS consists of:

- 1 nursery class of 30 children, full-time 30 hours.
1 teacher and 1 level 3 teaching assistant and 1 level 2 teaching assistant.

Parents can access 30 hours funding <https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare>

- 2 reception classes of 30 children each, 8.55am – 3.15pm
2 teachers and 2 level 3 teaching assistants and 1 level 2 teaching assistant.

All children can access a drop off facility from 8.30 – 8.55am.

Morning session 8.55 – 11.30am (15minute break time for Reception)

Afternoon session 12.30 – 3.15pm (3.00pm finish for Nursery)

4. Curriculum and Teaching

Our curriculum is planned to bring together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through the four themes set out in the EYFS Framework:

- A Unique Child – every child is a competent learner.
- Positive Relationships – children learn to be strong and independent.
- Enabling Environments – supporting and extending a child's development.
- Learning and Development – 3 prime and 4 specific areas of learning and development.

4.1 - Unique Child.

At St Luke's RC we believe that every child is a unique individual created in the image of God, with unique needs, skills and talents. We aim to nurture this through supporting every child in becoming independent learners by developing and maintaining the '*Characteristics of Effective Learning*' as set out in the EYFS Framework:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

These underpin all learning in the prime and specific areas of learning and development. They ensure that a child is an effective independent and motivated learner. They can be observed by the way in which the child engages with other people and their environment.

4.2 - Learning and Development

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 as the foundations for all future learning.

The seven areas of learning and development are centred around three prime areas:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional development
- Physical development

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Children cannot master the skills within the specific areas without developing the prime areas and 'Characteristics of Effective Learning'. These are then strengthened by four specific areas.

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-centred curriculum which allows children to make lots of links between what they are learning. All Areas of Learning and Development are given equal weighting and value. At St Luke's RC Primary School, we believe that Early Years education is important in its own right and should not be viewed simply as preparation for the next stage of children's education. We believe that the EYFS framework allows a natural progression into the National Curriculum at the beginning of Year 1.

4.3 - Enabling Environments

We recognise that young children learn best through when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able 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.

We provide both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will 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 as well as challenging themselves to move onto the next stages in their development. In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework. We aim to do this by:

- Providing a rich variety of experiences in response to the children's interests and needs.
- Ensuring welcoming, child friendly and stimulating indoor and outdoor areas. These environments are constantly changing and adapting as they are planned around the children's interests and needs.
- Establishing routines so that children begin to anticipate and feel confident to take the next step. Pictorial timetables give children the security to know and understand their routines.
- Having clearly labelled and easily accessible permanent resources and enhancements. We use dyslexia friendly labels with photographs and words.

4.4 - Positive Relationships

Adult-child interactions are at the heart of these play experiences. We aim to ensure high quality adult-child interactions through forming positive relationships in the following ways:

- We have a team of highly qualified, dedicated, professional and caring Early Years practitioners who plan and work closely together to provide a high quality curriculum.
- Every child is assigned a Key person from our EYFS team who is responsible for each individual's well-being and is the first contact for parents. We value our parent partnership with an open door policy.

- Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. All children engage in daily Literacy, Maths and phonics sessions. They also access small group or 1:1 sessions such as guided reading.
- Children are encouraged to have a go and challenge themselves without the worry of making mistakes; promoting confident, independent learners.
- 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.
- An EYFS practitioner is Elkan trained and supports all other practitioners in developing their interactions with children. This is further supported by working closely with other services as needed e.g. supporting interactions with ASD children through liaising with Learning and Support Service.

5. Assessment

The EYFS statutory framework requires schools to undertake two summative assessments in Reception. On entry to Reception all children will complete the national baseline assessment. Please follow this link for more information:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1025098/Information_for_parents_reception_baseline_assessment.pdf

At the end of Reception all children will be assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals set out in the EYFS Profile.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1024319/Early_years_foundation_stage_profile_handbook_2022.pdf

Practitioners work together using on-going observations and relevant records to determine whether the child is:

- meeting the expected levels of levels of development (EXPECTED)
- not yet meeting the expected levels of development (EMERGING).

Children are defined as having reached a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the EYFS if they have achieved at least the expected level for the ELGs in the prime areas of learning and the specific areas of mathematics and literacy. This information will be reported to parents and shared with Year 1 practitioners. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

In addition to these statutory requirements our ongoing cycle of observe, assess and plan is an integral part of the learning and development processes here at St. Luke's. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of development, interests and learning styles. Staff also use systems such as Phonics Tracker, PM benchmark, pencil grip tracker and WellComm to track progress. All of this information is used to plan for the next steps in each child's development. We encourage parents to contribute evidence to inform these assessments via SeeSaw.

Progress is shared with parents formally at parent meetings where next steps are discussed and advice is given on how to support their child. Practitioners also discuss progress regularly on an informal basis, working with parents to meet each individual's needs, providing support and challenge.

All of this assessment and tracking is gathered and used to analyse the progress, learning, development and achievement of cohorts. We then use this to inform our EYFS Action Plan.

6. Parents as Partners

Parents are a child's primary educator. It is therefore fundamental that as practitioners we liaise closely with parents. This is done in a variety of ways:

- Open door ethos – practitioners are available for informal chats at the start and end of the school day.
- Each child has an EYFS practitioner assigned to them as a key person. This person works to establish close relationships with both the child and parents to ensure that home and school work together to meet the needs of the child.
- Transition meetings and visits.
- Parent open days and meetings.
- Curriculum meetings / workshops for Phonics, Reading, Writing and Maths.
- Reading records.
- SeeSaw is used to share learning experiences and information.
- Class pages on website with curriculum and other useful information for parents.
- Facebook is used to encourage parental involvement.
- Home-school dairies if needed e.g. if a child has additional needs or contact with parents is limited.
- For children with SEND we hold regular meetings to review play plans as well as multiagency meetings involving parents where applicable.
- Regularly sharing children's online Learning Journeys with the next steps in their development.
- End of year reports.

7. 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, by ensuring that these areas are covered within our indoor and outdoor activities, circle time and assemblies, visitors, role play, books and positive images.
- We work closely with our Educational Psychologist and outside agencies such as Learning Support Service and Speech and Language to ensure inclusion. We have Elkan trained practitioners.
- 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.

For further details see: St Luke's "Equality and Diversity" Policy.

8. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote the health and well-being of all children through our Jigsaw PSHE and Come and See RE schemes and Caritas topics. We also regularly promote healthy eating and well-being in our day to day interactions and by talking to the children at snack time as well as initiatives such as rewarding positive LUKIES behaviour.

We follow the statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements as set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework. Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Tracy Simpson (EYFS manager) and approved by Catherine Barrett (Assistant Head teacher) every year.

At every review, the policy will be shared with 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