

EYFS POLICY FOR ST. MARGARET'S CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL



At St. Margaret's Church of England Primary School we seek to develop wisdom, encourage aspiration and promote dignity and acceptance enabling our respectful children to live a life giving back to the community.

John 10:10: 'Live life in all its fullness.'

Aspiration

Wisdom

Endurance

Approved by the governing body on:	Autumn 2026
Shared with stakeholders on:	Autumn 2026
Next review:	Autumn 2027

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy.

Principles.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A unique child.

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement as well as celebration and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships.

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with children and their families.

Enabling environments.

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. Through observations we assess the children’s interests and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

Learning and development.

The Foundation Stage is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The seven areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At St Margaret’s we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying the secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS covers the period in children’s development from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in the Foundation Stage to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents and

carers, support staff and the Foundation team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their charge.

Aims

The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help children learn and develop well, remain healthy and safe, and be ready for the next stage of their education through a secure foundation built on high-quality early learning experiences.

We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At St Margaret's CofE Primary School we aim to:-

- Provide a safe and challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment that is sensitive to the needs of all children;
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond;
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress;
- Enable choice and decision making - fostering independence and self-confidence;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers and value their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, gender or ability have the opportunity to reach their potential;
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development;
- Provide experiences for all children that, whatever their needs, are inclusive.

Learning and development

Learning and development is categorised into three prime areas of learning:

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

Additionally there are four Specific Areas of Learning

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World

- Expressive Arts and Design.

Achievement in all Areas is evidenced as children display the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These are:

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

Observation, assessment and planning

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows that the principles of the EYFS are put into practice; planning is informed by observations we have made of the children, and this ensures that we understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All staff who work in the Foundation Stage are a part of this process.

The planning within the EYFS is based around the children's interests. These plans are used by the EYFS team as a guide for weekly planning. However, plans are altered in response to the needs of the children.

Assessment is ongoing and based on professional knowledge of the child, observation, interaction and evidence gathered through everyday learning experiences. Information is used to inform teaching, identify next steps and share progress with parents and carers. At the end of Reception, practitioners complete the statutory EYFS Profile in accordance with Department for Education requirements.

Learning through play

At St Margaret's we do not make a distinction between work and play. Children learn through planned play activities and staff will decide when child-initiated or adult – led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities.

The induction process

During the summer term, the EYFS staff go out to meet children in their pre-school settings, and make a first point of contact with them. The staff talk to the children's pre-school/nursery key workers, and find out about children's likes and dislikes and preferred ways of working

Parents/Carers are invited to school for a meeting with the Head Teacher and EYFS teachers and staff . The Parents/Carers have the opportunity to find out about school routines and expectations and staff are available to answer any questions. Soon after this meeting, the children have their first induction visit, and are cared for by Early Years staff. The children attend a series of induction sessions, some of which will include joining in with curriculum activities.

When the children start school they will begin with some half days before attending full-time. If a parent/carer feels a child is not ready to attend full time, they can attend part time until they are of compulsory school age in consultation with the school.

Home and school links

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the school and parents and carers to work closely together. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development, but relies on a two way flow of information and knowledge.

We develop this working relationship between school and parents and carers as follows:

- We hold parent consultation meetings at least twice per year to discuss progress and how the child is settling in;
- We encourage parents/carers to contribute to their child's 'Learning Journey' by informing us of their child's efforts and achievements outside school, and by engaging with their children's 'next steps';
- Where possible, parents/Carers are welcomed into school at the end of the school day to discuss any issues that may have arisen;
- The class teacher sends home reading books and phonics activities;
- We publish our topics/themes for each term on our website;
- We operate an open door policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Conversely if Early Years staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will approach parents and carers to discuss the issues;
- We conduct workshops for parents and carers to enable them to be familiar with the teaching methods used in school to make it easier to emulate them at home;
- Parents and carers will be kept informed about their child's learning, development, wellbeing and progress. The school recognises parents and carers as children's first educators and values collaborative working to support positive outcomes for every child.

We outline the school's expectations and curriculum on the school website.

Intimate care

This is any care that involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, a child's stage of development may mean that they need some support with, for example, dressing, using the toilet or changing underwear and clothes.

Parents inform staff of those children likely to require such care and a discussion takes place regarding how their needs can be met as closely in school as they would be met at home. Parents provide clean clothing and are always informed when a child has needed such care.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

Privacy is maintained as far as possible and members of staff are encouraged to change a child

in the presence of another staff member.

Intimate care is given to children who need it in line with our school policy. Parents/Carers are always informed when this care is given.

Safer Sleep

St. Margaret's CofE Primary School recognises its statutory responsibility to promote safe sleeping practices for all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Where children sleep or rest during the school day:

Children will be placed in environments that are safe, suitable and appropriately supervised. Staff will follow current NHS safer sleep guidance and guidance published by The Lullaby Trust. Sleeping children will remain within sight or hearing of staff and will be checked regularly. Any child requiring sleep or rest during the school day will be supported according to their individual needs and in consultation with parents and carers. Staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and welfare training relating to safer sleep procedures.

These arrangements will be implemented in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the statutory EYFS framework.

Children's Screen Use

The school recognises the importance of promoting healthy development through high-quality interactions, active learning and play-based experiences.

Where digital technology is used within the EYFS:

Its use will have a clear educational purpose. Screen-based activities will not replace opportunities for physical activity, outdoor learning, social interaction, communication and creativity. Staff will have regard to the Department for Education guidance on children's screen use in early years settings. Children will be supported to develop safe, balanced and age-appropriate attitudes towards technology.

Inclusion and equal opportunities

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. 'One Plans' give a clear picture of the child's strengths and needs, and targets are set in partnership with parents and, where appropriate, the children themselves.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we provide all children regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in

promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

Safeguarding and Staff Suitability

The welfare of children is paramount. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and underpins all aspects of practice within the EYFS.

The school will ensure that:

- All staff, volunteers and students are recruited and vetted in accordance with statutory safeguarding requirements;
- New members of staff do not begin employment in EYFS provision until the required enhanced DBS and barred list checks have been received;
- Volunteers working within EYFS provision are subject to appropriate safeguarding and suitability checks in line with EYFS requirements;
- Staff understand their responsibility to disclose any information that may affect their suitability to work with children;
- Any safeguarding concerns, allegations or incidents are reported, recorded and referred in line with statutory guidance and the school's safeguarding procedures.

The school will fulfil all statutory duties to report allegations of harm and safeguarding concerns to relevant agencies, including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Ofsted and other agencies where required.

Other relevant policies

- This policy should be read alongside:
- The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- The Positive Behaviour Policy;
- The Attendance Policy;
- The SEND Policy;
- The Intimate Care Policy;
- The Online Safety Policy;
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (Group and School-Based Providers), effective from 1 September 2026.

