St Michael's CE (A) First School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

2026-2029

Our Vision:

At St Michael's we strive to develop and inspire courageous, respectful and resilient learners encouraging them to serve with kindness and tolerance guided by our Christian values so that they can flourish, living 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10).

This Policy is intended for: -

- Practitioners within the Foundation Stage/wider school
- The school Governors
- Parents
- Children's services advisors and inspectors
- Inspection teams Copies are provided to school staff and Governors.

Copies are available in school or on the school website. This is to ensure accessibility to parents, Children's Services, Ofsted and other interested agencies.

Admissions

The school reviews it's admission policy annually with Governors and consults more widely on any changes made. The Local Authority manage the allocation of places on the school's behalf.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That the children at St Michael's C.E. (A) First School can access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for 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.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti discriminatory practice.

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2025

Introduction

"All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential."

(EYFS Framework 2025)

Rationale

At St Michaels CE (A) First School we aim to provide an exciting, enriching and creative learning environment where all children are encouraged to fulfil their potential giving them the best possible start in their learning journey. We provide a stimulating and safe learning environment both indoors and out where the children actively explore to deepen their learning and understanding. Our Christian ethos is at the heart of everything we do and our nurturing environment inspires our young children to develop their emotional wellbeing through our core values

The Early Years Foundation Stage extends from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, the EYFS consists of a Nursery and a Reception class. Children can attend the Nursery class from the term after their 3rd birthday. All children join us full time at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. The structure of the EYFS at St Michaels is that we have a one form entry with separate Nursery and Reception classes. Our Early Years Foundation Stage pupils also benefit from a newly refurbished shared area with a bike track. The EYFS also have access to the school's field and garden area.

Early Year Curriculum

Our children are exposed to the 17 curriculum areas on a daily basis in our Nursery and Reception classes. We ensure a balance of child initiated and focused learning, guided by the teaching staff in continuous provision with many opportunities for challenge and the chance to engage in deep level learning. 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 three prime areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional development (PSED)
- Communication and language (C&L)

- Physical Development (PD)

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through the four specific areas:
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World (UW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

The 3 prime areas are at the core of all our teaching, planning and learning. These skills ensure the children form positive relationships and build confidence to explore and question. The 4 specific areas take support from the prime where the children engage in activities to extend and challenge their learning for a greater depth and understanding of particular skills.

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 activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. Additionally, Religious Education features in the Reception curriculum plan weekly and reflects the Diocesan Long term plan.

Enabling Environments

At St Michael's C.E. (A) First School we recognise that 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. Our classroom environments enable the children to practice their skills and be challenged with consistent positive praising and learning behavior rewards. We pride ourselves on the expertise of our staff who always seek to learn more themselves and plan learning suited to the childrens' needs.

A Unique Child

At St Michael's CE (A) First School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
We recognise that God made all children unique and that children develop in individual ways, 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/ sharing worships and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at St Michael's CE (A) First School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. As a Christian School, we give equal value to all God's children and their families.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. 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.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of 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 meet the needs of all our children by:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Providing a safe and supportive culture underpinned by Christian values
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the school 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 Whole School Safeguarding Children 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.' (EYFS Statutory Framework 2025)

At St Michael's CE (A) First School are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, both physical and emotional, of every pupil both inside and outside the school and pre-school premises. We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025.

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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

At St Michael's C.E. (A) First School we support pupils to become confident and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.
We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this by:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our nursery and school
- Making contact with previous settings to ensure a smooth induction is in place
- Providing opportunities for children to spend time with the EYFS practitoners before starting school during 'Settling in' sessions.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- Inviting parents to accompany children to their settling in session.
- Rigorous hand over procedures keep Nursery parents informed of events daily. email communication used for parents who aren't able to collect or drop off children
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's key person if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for reception parents in the autumn and spring terms at which the child's key person and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the key person
- Providing all families with a school report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each year

- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: parent sessions, Sports Day etc
- Providing opportunities for parents to make contributions to their child's learning journey through Seesaw
- Sending weekly updates about what the children have been learning are provide to parents via Seesaw.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school all children will be assigned a 'key person'. In Nursery the Nursery Manager and Nursery Nurses will have key groups. In Reception the Teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in the class, supported by the Teaching Assistant.
We have good links with nurseries in the local area. The Foundation Stage Manager meets with staff to discuss new intake children. Strong links are established between the Nursery and Reception settings. The planning and implementation of learning in the shared outdoor space is carried out collaboratively with staff from across the EYFS.

Observation, Assessment and Planning
We are proud of the curriculum we have created a curriculum for our children at St Michaels CE (A) First School. It offers progression through from age two to age five and prepares each child for the next step in their learning journey with us. Experiences are planned to enable and inspire the children to learn effectively and offers pupils the opportunity to develop their cultural capital. We also take into account individual needs, children's interests, and the stages of development of each child. Our staff are skilled in ensuring that all children's needs are met and will quickly seek advice from our school SEND Coordinator, who will support in linking with relevant support agencies if needed. Staff are reflective and will adjust and change the way that they deliver learning to suit the needs of the children they are teaching.

Teaching
Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of age appropriate adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through positive interactions. Our outdoor provision enables children to take managed risks, use their gross motor skills and access role play with open ended resources that really capture the children's interests.

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between practitioners and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement

- The underpinning of all curriculum delivery and content by our core Christian values
- The expectation that practitioners have a good understanding of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management
- The support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents
- The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.

Assessment

At St Michaels CE (A) First School our Early Years staff pride themselves on knowing the children by spending quality time having quality interactions. They are able to articulate which children are on track for their age and stage and intervene quickly when children are not on track. These ongoing assessments are an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning.

In our early years we use Seesaw as a means of capturing 'wow' moments and sharing school learning with parents. This is also a fantastic opportunity for us to see what children are learning and achieving out of school and we highly value parent contributions to the Seesaw learning journals.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment. 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:

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

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. The

profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other EY's practitioners across different schools to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

At St Michael's CE (A) First School, we use the Early Years Outcomes and Early Learning Goal to assess the children's progress.
During the foundation stage the EYFS practitioners will also assess each child's individual Characteristics of Effective Learning. The children will be observed to assess the way in which each child learns:
• Playing and exploring
• Active learning
• Creating and thinking critically

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELGs. We provide opportunities for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

Effective transitions and school readiness

A child's wellbeing through education is pivotal to ensure all children feel happy and safe. It is vital that we support children as they transfer through different stages in their life; especially when entering into our school Nursery, Reception and Year 1.
At St Michael's, transition is a whole year process and not just an event that happens during the Summer Term. We aim to gradually prepare children and parents for their next stage in development by helping them to be school ready.
Ways we transition:
• Summer term visits to nurseries to meet the children and talk to the key workers.
Summer term play and stay sessions at St Michaels, inviting parents and their children to come along and see their classroom, play and meet their teachers.

- Reception share the same outside area as nursery to teachers and student have the chance to get to know each other well before their transition to Reception.
- Parent information meetings-A chance for parents/carers to find out about their child's upcoming year in reception and ask any questions they may have.
- All about me packs to allow parents, staff and teachers to get to know each other and start the parent partnership that continues through their school journey.
- Year 1 Transition sessions- The children in Reception will meet their new teacher in the Summer term ready to move up in the next academic year. During this time they will complete a short transition project.

Intimate care

Within our EYFS settings we have procedures and care plans in place to support children who need extra support in areas such as; dressing/undressing, medical, toileting support, changing table facilities and EHCP's. We understand children develop at different rates and we work well in partnership with families and other agencies to

ensure a child's learning and development is supported by all means. Care plans are written with parents for children needing toileting support. We actively encourage parents to start helping their children become independent with these tasks as soon as they start in Nursery. 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 and parents work in partnership to give the right support to an individual child.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS practitioners to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The Head teacher, Foundation stage manager and other subject leaders will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner should guidance change.

Foundation Stage Manager

Mrs S. Hall

Last reviewed : June 2026

Date of next review: June 2029