

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

FROM ALPHA TO OMEGA



School Vision and Values School Vision and Values

At Emmanuel Church of England School, broad opportunities are provided for individuals to develop their full potential and allow them to be healthy, happy and secure.

It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels cared for, valued, respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. This is promoted through our school values; where children learn to be respectful, to forgive and to move on so that they can experience:

'Life in all its fullness.' John 10:10

Aims

Through a strong partnership with parents/carers, we aim to provide a rich learning environment that is happy, loving, warm, stimulating and safe. Our children will be encouraged and nurtured to become competent, confident, independent and co-operative learners, who feel supported in the taking of risks and the exploration of their own learning. We value all children's cultural inheritance, diversity of language and beliefs and we aim to develop the whole child socially, emotionally, creatively, physically, academically and spiritually in an environment that is supportive and challenging. Parental involvement is crucial in enabling us to achieve our aims and is encouraged both inside and outside the Early Years environment.

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

The Early Years Foundation Stage is the term used to describe Nursery and Reception provision within our school.

The Early Years Foundation Stage at Emmanuel

Our Nursery has 26 full-time places. We also have 1 Reception Class of 30 children. Our Nursery and Reception classes consist of a teacher in each class, a nursery nurse and Teaching and Learning Assistants.

Principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The EYFS curriculum at Emmanuel CE Primary School is delivered in accordance with the statutory document **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**, which sets the standards for

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the learning, development and care of children from birth to five. This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes:

A unique child:

- Every child is a unique, competent learner.
- Children develop in individual ways and at varying rates.
- Children's attitudes are fluid and can be influenced by others.

Positive relationships:

- Children learn to be strong, independent individuals by developing secure relationships with teachers and peers alike.
- Relationships with parents and carers are also important and will be nurtured and developed.
- Any relationship will be respectful, caring and professional.

Enabling environments:

- The learning and play environments are vital for supporting and extending a child's development.
- In the classroom and outdoor environment, we observe and assess the children's development and interests.
- Based on these observations, suitably challenging activities and experiences are planned to extend their learning and achievement.

Learning and development:

- Emmanuel School is organised in a way that encourages children to explore and learn safely.
- There are areas for activities and play, and others for quiet time and rest.
- The setting is designed to enable children to learn and play independently.

Learning and Development

At Emmanuel CE Primary School, a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum is provided which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral and cultural development within a safe, secure, stimulating environment. Our curriculum enables children to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding in the following seven areas of learning:

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**, which sets out the learning and development requirements for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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 for

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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 4 specific areas:

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

Communication and Language

Communication and Language consists of the following three aspects: **listening and attention, understanding and speaking**. Through adult support and planned activities, children will be encouraged to become confident communicators. This is achieved through learning to listen and speak, which emerges out of non-verbal communication such as facial expressions, eye contact and hand gestures. They are also encouraged to extend their vocabulary through conversation, storytelling and high-quality adult interaction. They will experience stories, songs, poems and rhymes and also take part in role-play, using talk to clarify their thinking and develop their ability to distinguish between sounds. They become familiar with rhyme, rhythm, alliteration and eventually use this knowledge to read and write simple words.

Physical Development

Physical Development consists of the following two aspects: **moving and handling, health and self-care**. Through using a range of equipment and opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, children learn to move with confidence, imagination and safety. Children also have the opportunity to work with a specialist PE teacher, who visits the school weekly. They develop an awareness of space for themselves and others. They learn about the importance of keeping healthy and the factors that contribute to maintaining their health.

A selection of activities is always provided that enables pupils to develop their fine-motor skills in order to be able to write and use small tools. Before children can write, they must learn how to hold a pencil correctly and be able to draw lines and circles in both clockwise and anti-clockwise directions.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development consists of the following three aspects: **making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness, managing feelings and behaviour**. Within a nurturing environment, our children are supported to become excited and motivated about their learning. They are individually supported to develop a positive sense of self, respect for others, to build relationships and social skills. Our children are encouraged to play and learn alone and in groups of varying sizes, sharing and co-operating with other children and adults. We share the belief that “All children have the right to play and to join in a wide range of activities” Unicef Rights Respecting Article 31. Through activities, conversations and practical activities, children will be encouraged to express their ideas and feelings and to develop strategies to cope with new, challenging or stressful situations. We will also provide children with a range of positive images that challenge and help them to embrace differences in gender, ethnicity, language, religion, culture, special educational needs and disabilities.

Literacy

Literacy consists of the following two aspects: **reading and writing**. Children will experience a wide range of stories, books (fiction and non-fiction) and rhymes to help them recognise that print carries meaning. Children will develop an understanding of the relationship between the spoken and written word, ascribe meaning to writing and begin to form letters. This is supported through daily phonics lessons within the EYFS using a **systematic synthetic phonics approach, Essential Letters and Sounds**. Phonics teaching is structured, sequential and supports children in developing early reading and writing skills.

Mathematics

Mathematics consists of the following two aspects: **number and shape, space and measure**. Through adult support and practical experience, children will gradually use numbers and counting in play and eventually recognise and use numbers reliably to develop mathematical ideas and solve problems. Children will be encouraged to develop an awareness of the relationship between numbers and amounts and know that numbers can be combined to be ‘added together’, and can be separated by ‘taking away’ and that two or more amounts can be compared. They will also have the opportunity to talk about shapes and quantities and develop appropriate vocabulary. Children are encouraged to use their knowledge to develop ideas to solve mathematical problems.

Understanding the World

Understanding the world consists of the following three aspects: **people and communities, the world and technology**. Children will be given opportunities to investigate objects and materials and their properties, learn about change and patterns, similarities and differences and question how and why things work. They will have opportunities to construct with a range of tools, materials and

techniques. Children will have opportunities to explore and use a range of technologies and digital resources, including computers and programmable toys, where appropriate to support their learning. They will be able to find out about past and present events, become aware and interested in the natural world and find out about their local area. They will also have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of their own and other people's cultures in order to understand and celebrate the similarities and differences in a diverse society.

Expressive Arts and Design

Expressive arts and design consists of the following two aspects: **exploring media and materials and being imaginative**. A range of activities are planned for children so that they will be able to see, hear, smell, touch or feel a range of things. There will also be planned opportunities for children to work with a variety of media and materials, thinking about and working with colour, texture, shape, space and form in two and three dimensions. They also work with a range of instruments and materials that make different sounds and learn how these can be changed to make a pattern or song. Children also have the opportunity to take part in extra peripatetic music lessons if their parent(s) wish. Children will also have opportunities to develop their imagination through role play, stories, music, dance, design and art.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Underpinning all teaching in the EYFS are the characteristics of effective learning, which highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. These characteristics describe how children learn and are considered when planning activities and interactions with children. All activities that take place within Nursery and Reception classes are planned with these characteristics in mind. The three characteristics are:

- Playing and exploring: children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'
- Active learning: children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements
- Creating and thinking critically: children have and develop their own ideas, make links within their learning, and develop their own strategies for doing things.

Learning through play

At Emmanuel CE Primary School, we understand that play inside and outside is a very important part of young children's lives. Through play, children have practical, meaningful experiences. Play allows children to make sense of the world, encouraging them to explore and investigate in a non-threatening way. Play also provides an opportunity for children to come to terms with themselves, their culture, language, other people and the world, helping them to make sense of real-life situations. We believe that through play, children can learn at their own level and pace and can

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explore and experiment without fear of failure. Being outdoors offers children the freedom to explore, use their senses and be physically active.

Developing Early Language and School Readiness

Developing children's language and communication skills is a key priority within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Through high-quality interactions, storytelling, questioning and discussion, staff support children to develop a broad vocabulary and the confidence to express their ideas. We place a strong emphasis on listening, speaking and understanding so that children are well prepared for the next stage of their learning. Our Early Years curriculum supports children in developing independence, resilience, curiosity and positive attitudes to learning, helping to ensure they are ready for the transition into Year 1.

Planning

All children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. We plan for a range of different learning experiences for our children, to meet all their needs. All Early Years staff have input into the planning. We plan for the children at three different levels; long-term, medium-term and short-term. Long term planning consists of what children will experience for the year. Medium term planning consists of what children will experience for that half-term and short-term planning consists of what children will experience for that week. Our weekly planning shows whole class teaching, adult guided activities and focus child activities.

Assessment

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of our work. All staff who work with the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage observe the children to help them make progress. We make systematic observations and assessments of the children's achievements, interests and learning styles. These observations and assessments identify learning priorities for the children and help us to plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for them. Baseline assessments are carried out when children enter Nursery and Reception to establish their starting points. Practitioners use ongoing formative assessment through observation, interaction and professional judgement to understand each child's learning and development. In Reception, the class teacher also administers the Reception Baseline Assessment, and the outcomes are reported to the Department for Education.

Assessment focuses on identifying children's progress, strengths and areas where additional support may be needed. Observations inform planning and help practitioners provide learning experiences that support each child's next steps.

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Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. Work is collected from activities children have worked on with adults and work they have completed independently. Samples of work consist of things children have written or drawn, photographs, work completed on the computer and quotes children have said.

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 ('expected')
- 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 and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Transition between home and Nursery/Reception

At Emmanuel CE Primary School, we strongly believe that children should have as smooth a transition to Nursery and Reception classes as possible. We recognise it may be a big step for both children and parents as it may be the first-time parents have been separated from their child for a long period of time. For children, it is a brand-new experience away from the home setting. We aim for the experience to be positive for both parent and child and therefore have the following procedures in place:

Home Visit

We visit children and their parents/carers at home before the child starts school. There are many reasons why we make home visits; it is an opportunity for children and parents to meet the staff they will be working with, and for us to get to know each other. In our experience, we know that children are much more likely to find the transition from home to school easier and more enjoyable if they have already met the people they will be working with.

During the home visit, we ask parents a few questions to assist us with settling their child into school. We also have the opportunity to get to know and play with the child. We also ask parents to complete a special book with their child, which gives staff details of individual children. We find that this is a good 'ice-breaker' when children first start, as well as providing us with an understanding of the

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child's interests. This enables us to plan more accurately for each child's needs and to further develop the learning taking place at home and in school.

We transition children into our Nursery and Reception classes in small groups so that they have more time with members of staff during their first week and to help develop a relationship between the child and members of staff.

Stay and Play

We invite children and parents to come into their new classroom before the term starts to spend an hour playing, engaging in activities, speaking to members of staff and meeting other parents and children.

Parents/Carers

Parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators. When parents/carers and staff work together in our school, it has a positive impact on children's development and learning. Parents and carers can support our work at school by extending various school activities at home, as outlined in the weekly 'Homework Letter' that goes out every Friday. Spending quality time with children and giving them one-to-one attention will help them to develop valuable skills for school and life.

Photographs can be brought in to school and parents can tell us about new things they are doing at home so that we can work together more effectively as a team.

Safeguarding

At Emmanuel CE Primary School we are fully aware of our safeguarding responsibilities. All safeguarding procedures are in line with national safeguarding guidance and the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. All staff attend appropriate training and the Designated Safeguarding Lead is Kate Roscoe (Head of School) and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Gareth Edwards (Assistant Headteacher).

Staff know and abide by our mobile phone policy which includes the following:

- Parents and carers are asked to switch off mobile phones if they are coming into the early years setting and leave the setting if they need to use their mobile.
- Parents are generally prohibited from taking any photographs of children in the early years setting, but for special events such as school performances, may do so on the understanding that the images are not posted onto social media sites or otherwise shared.
- Staff seek parental permission to take photographs of the children, which must be linked to teaching the curriculum and that they use school equipment only for this purpose.

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- Staff do not bring personal mobile phones into the early years setting and use them only during breaks in the staff room.

Welfare Requirements

Emmanuel CE Primary School follows the welfare requirements outlined in the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage** to ensure that children are kept safe and their well-being is promoted.

This includes:

Staffing and Ratios

- Nursery staffing ratios follow statutory guidance.
- In Reception classes the statutory ratio of 1 teacher for up to 30 children is maintained.

Key Person Approach

- Each child is supported by a key adult who helps ensure their learning and care needs are met and supports communication with parents and carers.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

- All staff are trained in safeguarding and follow the school's safeguarding policy.
- Staff are aware of procedures for reporting concerns and understand their responsibility to protect children from harm.

Health and Safety

- Risk assessments are regularly carried out to ensure the learning environment is safe.
- Children are supervised at all times both indoors and outdoors.

Paediatric First Aid

- At least one member of staff with current paediatric first aid training is always present.

Links to other policies

- Safeguarding policy
- Intimate care and toileting policy

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Policy reviewed March 2026

Agreed review schedule Annually

Next review due March 2027