

St Peter's Catholic Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy September 2026

Overarching principles At St Peter's Catholic Primary School

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St Peter's Catholic Primary School, children can join our Preschool class during the term after they have turned two years old. Part time and full-time places are available depending upon demand and availability of places.

Children then move up into our F1 class when they are three years old and if they are socially and emotionally ready. Children then join our Foundation 2 class in the year that they turn five years old. In partnership with parents and carers, we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We believe that all children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. We endeavour to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. The EYFS is about what children learn, as well as how they learn. We believe that effective practice is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, and through adult-guided learning.

Statutory and related guidance

This policy should be read alongside the following statutory guidance and school policies:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for group and school-based providers, effective 1 September 2026;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years and the Equality Act 2010; and
- the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding, SEND, Health and Safety, Behaviour/Relationships, Intimate Care, First Aid and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policies and procedures.

The four guiding principles of the EYFS:

- A unique child – a child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments – with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Learning and development – an acknowledgement of the importance of learning and development and that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

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, 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 assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

All children and their families are valued at St Peter's Catholic Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provision available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take account of contributions from a range of perspectives so that any child with potential special educational needs and/or disabilities is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification is crucial in enabling staff to support each child's development. Concerns are discussed with parents and/or carers at an early stage and the school's SENCO is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's SEND Policy and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- 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 acting to provide support as necessary.
- Teaching and provision are adapted responsively to children's individual strengths, needs, development and barriers to learning. A range of approaches, resources and ways of recording learning are used so that all children can participate, demonstrate what they know and make progress.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We help children understand boundaries, rules and limits and why they exist. Children are supported to take appropriate, managed risks and are taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of every child. (See the whole-school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.)

"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" (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for group and school-based providers, effective 1 September 2026).

At St Peter's Catholic Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for group and school-based providers, effective 1 September 2026. We are required to:

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- Develop positive relationships between children and the adults caring for them.
- Promote good health, prevent the spread of infection and take appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children; promote good health; manage behaviour; and maintain records, policies and procedures.
- 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 are 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.

Positive Relationships

At St Peter's Catholic Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with children and their families.

Parents as Partners

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 through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;

- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transition sessions
- supporting children through transition from Preschool into F1, F1 to F2 and F2 into year 1.
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and share sessions, celebration assemblies, school visits, parent workshops, VLE
- providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by communication on Tapestry, online learning journal.
- ensuring all parents know who their child's teacher and teaching assistant is, and key worker
- by providing meetings where parents are able to discuss any concerns.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and appropriately challenged. Children have daily access to indoor and outdoor environments set up in discrete areas of learning, with planned continuous provision focused on the seven areas of learning in the EYFS. Each Early Years room has its own outdoor space.

Effective learning builds on and extends prior learning and follows children's interests. We aim to develop children's long-term memory and make learning meaningful and memorable. Planning is informed by practitioners' knowledge of children, including observations, interests and experiences. Significant observations may be recorded on Tapestry, the online learning journal, and in subject workbooks; practitioners are not required to collect excessive evidence.

Learning and Development

The EYFS learning and development requirements for group and school-based providers are made up of the seven areas of learning and development, as set out in the educational programmes described below.

The Three prime areas are particularly important for learning and forming relationships. They build a foundation for children to thrive and provide the basis for learning in all areas. The three prime areas are;

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.
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The four specific areas, which help strengthen and develop the three prime areas, and ignite children's curiosity and enthusiasm. The **four specific areas** are;

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

In reception year, teachers and practitioners will also utilise the early learning goals which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the EYFS.

Key person

Each child is assigned a key person. Children need to build an attachment with their key person for their confidence and well-being. We inform parents and/or carers of the name of the key person, and explain their role when a child starts attending a setting. A key person's role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and

build a relationship with their parents and/or carers. They also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

Planning and assessment

Our curriculum is ambitious for all children. We consider the individual needs, interests and development of each child in our care. Practitioners use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences for each child across all areas of learning and development.

Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.

When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. Assessment is proportionate and should not require excessive evidence gathering or prolonged breaks from interaction with children. Ongoing assessment includes information provided by parents, carers and other settings. If a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff discuss this with parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may include discussion with the SENCO and support in accordance with the school's SEND Policy and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. Practitioners keep parents and/or carers up to date through regular communication, written reports, parent meetings and, where appropriate, the online learning journal.

Lesson plans, Provision planning (enhanced and linked provision) and adult and child led activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At St Peter's, we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These 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 achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. We decide what we want our children to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning.

RBA

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment undertaken within the first six weeks after a child starts Reception. It is administered in accordance with the current statutory RBA assessment and reporting arrangements and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage effective 1 September 2026.

EYFSP

In the final term of the year in which a child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of the child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against expected levels and readiness for Year 1. Each child's development is assessed against the early learning goals as either 'expected' or 'emerging'.

2-YEAR-OLDS

In our Early Years Foundation Stage Preschool, planning is tailored to meet the individual needs of two-year-olds. Practitioners working with the youngest children focus strongly on the three prime areas, which provide the basis for successful learning in the four specific areas. As children grow in confidence and ability, planning shifts towards a more equal focus on all seven areas of learning.

Progress check at age 2

When a child is aged between two and three, practitioners review their progress, and provide parents and/or carers with a short, written summary of their child's development in the prime areas. If a child moves settings between the ages of two and three it is expected that the progress check would usually be undertaken by the setting where the child has spent most time. Practitioners will discuss with parents and/or carers how the summary of development can be used to support learning at home.

Practitioners encourage parents and/or carers to share the progress check with relevant professionals, including the child's health visitor and any new provision. Practitioners agree with parents and/or carers when it will be most useful to provide the summary. Where possible, the progress check and the Healthy Child Programme health and development review at age two should inform each other and support integrated working. Parental consent is obtained before developmental information is shared directly with other professionals, unless information must be shared to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.

EAL

We ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during their time in our EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Key Stage 1. When assessing communication, language, and literacy skills, practitioners must assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, practitioners must explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay. We work in partnership with external agencies to support our children who have EAL.

RE

All children within the Foundation Stage participate in Religious Education activities (unless parents request otherwise) and have a prayer area within their room. In Preschool, children learn to make the sign of the cross, say simple prayers and explore key RE themes. In F1, children are also taught liturgical prayer and attend Mass. Children in F2 follow the syllabus 'The Way, The Truth and The Light' and attend termly Masses within school. Foundation Stage children also participate in whole-school assemblies.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and Safety/Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. At St Peter's, we have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a whole-school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy which encompasses the EYFS. All staff act in accordance with that policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage effective 1 September 2026. Clear risk-assessment procedures cover outings and any aspect of the environment or provision requiring further assessment. An annual EYFS risk assessment is also completed.

All staff receive safeguarding training and updates appropriate to their role, read the required parts of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and understand how to report concerns about a child, allegations or concerns about adults, and low-level concerns. Staff remain alert to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation and other harm and respond promptly in accordance with school procedures. These may include:

- Significant changes in children's behaviour.
- A decline in children's general well-being.

- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect.
- Concerning comments from children.
- Inappropriate behaviour from practitioners, or any other person working with the children. This could include inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to-one attention beyond what is required through their role; or inappropriate sharing of images.
- Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation.

Safeguarding information is shared with relevant professionals and agencies where necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. Consent is sought where appropriate, but safeguarding information is not withheld solely because consent has not been obtained. Records are accurate, secure, timely and transferred in accordance with statutory guidance.

Concerns or allegations about adults working with children are managed under the school's safeguarding procedures. The school makes referrals and notifications to the Local Authority Designated Officer, Ofsted and/or other relevant bodies within the required timescales, including notifications concerning allegations of harm where the EYFS framework requires this.

The school ensures that any dogs kept on or brought onto the premises are suitable and safely managed. Dogs prohibited under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 are not kept or brought onto the premises, in accordance with the EYFS statutory requirements.

Safer eating

Before admission, parents and/or carers provide information about each child's food allergies, intolerances, dietary requirements and medical needs. This information is kept current, shared with all relevant staff and reflected in individual healthcare plans and risk assessments where required. Staff take steps to prevent cross-contamination and know the child-specific emergency response for an allergic reaction or anaphylaxis, including the location and use of prescribed adrenaline auto-injectors.

- Staff Training: We ensure there is always a staff member with a valid PFA certificate available during mealtimes.
- We have updated our meal provision to align with the new government nutrition guidance. This includes avoiding choking hazards like whole grapes and nuts, cutting food into safe sizes, and creating a calm, supportive environment.
- Safer Environment: Close supervision of children during mealtimes is crucial, where possible will be adults positioned to clearly see all children's faces and children will always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff.
- Student Staff: If St Peter's employs students or trainees, they will have their PFA certificate before being counted in any staff-to-child ratios.

Safer eating practices include close supervision, age-appropriate preparation of food and current risk assessments. Please see 'RA 074 Safer Eating Practices Risk Assessment 2026–2027' and the current First Aid Risk Assessment. Arrangements are reviewed in line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage effective 1 September 2026.

Sleeping

Where children sleep, staff follow safer-sleep procedures appropriate to each child's age and needs. Sleeping children are checked frequently, with the frequency recorded. Staff ensure children can be seen and heard, sleeping positions and breathing are monitored, and sleep mats, and bedding are clean, safe, in good condition and suitable for the child. Parents and/or carers are consulted about sleep routines, while the setting retains responsibility for following safe practice.

Toilets and intimate hygiene

Children's privacy during nappy changing and toileting is considered and balanced with safeguarding considerations. Please see separate policy for intimate care and nappy changing.

Ratios

We adhere to the staffing and ratio requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for group and school-based providers, effective 1 September 2026.

Transition

From PVI /Feeder settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into Preschool, F1 and F2, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.
- During the summer term parents are encouraged to complete an "all about me" booklet. It is used during the autumn term to support transition and to inform planning.
- The children are invited to a half day visit to their new class. There are also opportunities for children to have several other visits via an enhanced transition.
- Children within our EYFS setting and feeder settings will have opportunities to meet their new teacher and key worker (s)
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits via an enhanced transition, regardless of their setting.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in F2, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals as either 'expected' or 'emerging'. Year 1 teachers receive a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. This informs dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's development and learning needs and supports planning in Year 1.