



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Policy owner	EYFS School Improvement Lead
Policy approved by	Education Standards Committee
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Aims of EYFS Education

To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;

Inspire children through an imaginative and immersive curriculum, ensuring that the children are happy and enthusiastic to learn, that we foster and nurture the children's imagination and curiosity;

Immerse the children in their learning by creating an immersive environment that reflects and promotes each classes project, and therefore, learning;

Become independent, self-motivated and entrepreneurial learners, encouraging the children to adapt their work, think critically and take risks with their learning;

Be prepared for 21st Century life by ensuring that each and every child is literate and numerate, as well as empathetic towards others, able to be resilient and ambitious to succeed in whatever they set out to achieve;

Be their best in all they undertake, encouraging each and every child to try new things, work hard and push themselves to continue to achieve and to persevere in any activity that is before them;

Become curious about the world around them and practise the technique of enquiry. Encouraging the children to develop problem solving skills, tackling any activity they set out to do;

Be aware of the wider community, starting with their local community and providing opportunities to experience and learn about other communities and cultures further afield;

Be world wise by fostering and nurturing the children's social and interpersonal skills, ensuring that they have the opportunity to work as a member of a team and can share their experiences and knowledge with their peers.

St Barnabas EYFS INTENT

"At the heart of our Trust's vision for the Early Years is a deep commitment to giving every child an exciting, enriching start to their educational journey. We aim to spark an enduring love of learning by ensuring achievement for all, truly listening to every child's voice, and embracing what they bring to

school through our **“Bring It!”** philosophy. **We Bring Friendship by nurturing kind, inclusive communities.** Every child is supported to feel safe, valued, and connected—to know that they belong. Through collaborative play and shared experiences, we help children develop empathy, respect, and strong social skills that last a lifetime. **We Bring Creativity by designing a curriculum that inspires curiosity and imagination.** Our bespoke, carefully tailored curriculum is shaped around children’s interests, talents, and developmental needs. Teachers deliver focused learning sessions, while continuous provision and purposeful play allow children to explore and apply knowledge in meaningful ways—both indoors and outdoors. **We Bring Courage by empowering children to take risks, express themselves, and grow in confidence.** Communication is at the core of this. Our passionate practitioners prioritise speech and language development, enabling children to share ideas, articulate feelings, and feel heard. Learning to read is one of the most powerful tools we can give a child. Across our Trust, we place high importance on early reading to equip children with the skills, confidence, and joy needed to fully engage in the curriculum and thrive in life. We believe that education is most impactful when it is a shared journey. Our extended transition process, home learning opportunities, and EYFS online platform create strong partnerships with parents—celebrating successes and ensuring seamless communication between home and school. Our approach develops children who are independent, thoughtful, and ready to take responsibility for themselves, their communities, and the wider world. Through friendship, creativity, and courage, we prepare them not just for school, but for life.”

Curriculum

St Barnabas MAT follows the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, for group and school based providers. This defines what we teach.

This policy details the specifics of each of our settings and schools.

There are seven areas of learning and development that set out what providers must teach the children in their setting. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. (DFE 2024 para 1.4, 1.5)

These are the prime areas ;

- Communication and Language – Listening Attention and Understanding, and Speaking
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Self Regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships.

- Physical Development – Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills.
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The specific areas are:

- Literacy – Comprehension, Reading and Writing
- Mathematics – Number and Numerical Patterns
- Understanding the World – Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities and the Natural World.
- Expressive Arts and Design – Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative and Expressive.

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These are regularly assessed through observations and planned for throughout the EYFS.

The three characteristics are:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things and events around them and ‘have a go’
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different experiences and develop strategies for doing things.

Teaching Strategies

We ensure that there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. We believe that even during child initiated activities the adults’ role and interaction with the child is essential as this helps to build the child’s understanding and so guides new learning. The role of the adult is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the children are doing, either through participation in the children’s game or encouraging the children to participate or complete a task with the adult. The children are taught through a number of different strategies that are both Early Years based as well as direct teaching and other more investigative learning approaches.

Play

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. We believe that children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. We carefully plan the environment and opportunities within this environment to reflect on what has interested the children, making sure that we provide opportunities to extend and practise the skills they have learned during the project or through direct teaching. We ensure that each of the different areas of learning are represented in the environment and provide different experiences and opportunities to learn. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Achieving and maintaining the balance between child initiated and adult led activities is very important to us.

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood. Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. This looks quite different in the Nursery and Reception classes. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these sessions we focus on maths, literacy, phonics, music and movement and stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, healthy living, sitting still etc... Reading and story play an important part of the day. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and will leave the EYFS with a bank of stories they know well, both traditional and modern classics.

Visits and Visitors

The part of visits and visitors plays a very important role in the Early Years, as these are seen as an opportunity to further develop our children's view of their world or community. Each term the children are given the opportunity to widen their experience through either visits to specific areas (e.g. the seaside, local farms or zoos) or have visitors invited into the school who are seen as experts in their field. Each of these visits and visitors are carefully planned and tailored to the project the children are actively learning. As well as carefully planning these experiences we ensure that all ratios are matched for the year group carefully. We ensure that there

is a ratio of 1:4 with the Reception class and 1:2 with the children in Nursery. We encourage parental support with trips where possible.

Classroom Organisation

Our Early Years classrooms are organised with defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure that children can access these easily and confidently. All rooms in the Early Years are planned carefully, ensuring that the areas not only continue to immerse the children in their learning and development but to also provide the children the opportunity to access all seven areas of learning. Classrooms have the opportunity for children to experience writing, maths, creative play, role-play, construction and small world play, as well as quieter reading areas.

The outdoor area is as important as the indoor environment and is something we continue to develop, ensuring that we take our learning outside as much as possible, creating the links between the indoor and outdoor environments.

Assessments, Observations and WOW Moments

The statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

Assessments are made in line with the EYFS Statutory Framework. It is an essential and important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. This involves practitioners observing children in a variety of opportunities to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. This happens live throughout any taught session as well as during free flow times when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. These observations and assessments will then be used to shape and alter any future learning.

On entry to Nursery or Reception a baseline assessment is carried out for each child, using assessment from taught sessions and from free flow observations. These assessments are collated and put into a tracking tool, this allows us to collate all the data and assessments for each child measuring progress and highlighting children to those on track, progressing well or those who are a concern and not on track to achieve the ELGs (Early Learning Goals) , which then allows us to tailor the project or curriculum accordingly for each individual child. These assessments are entered onto the tracking system at the end of each **half** term throughout Reception. At the end of the Reception year each child is assessed against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs). They are assessed as either emerging or expected in the ELG for each of the 17 areas of learning and a report is given to parents informing

them about their child's learning and progress in each of the areas of learning. This information is also given to the Year 1 teachers to aid transition.

Each term the assessments are made and collated and form the basis for the conversation during progress meetings with the Head of School, class teacher and SENCO looking at what is being put into place to support or extend any children within the class.

Role of Staff and Key Workers

The class teacher is the named key worker for each class in the setting. In the nurseries each member of qualified EYs staff is a key worker too. The role of each teacher and key person is to ensure that each child's care and development is carefully catered for through play and other experiences. Each adult aims to develop a positive relationship with each child in the group, as we believe that a happy and confident child is a child that is ready to learn.

Relationship with Parents and Carers

We actively seek positive relationships with the parents as well as the children as we believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and so we aim to work very closely with parents. We invite parents into Nursery and Reception in order to allow the parents to observe an early maths or phonics session, which will then help them to understand how we teach these particular skills, with the aim of this being continued when they go home.

Transitions

We have several transitions throughout the Foundation Stage that we manage with care. The first transition is that transition into Nursery, which is very often some children's first experience of any type of setting or school. For this transition 'Stay and Play' sessions in the Nursery setting are arranged in the term prior to the child commencing. These 'Stay and Play' times provide an invaluable opportunity for the children and parents to meet the adults in the setting and become familiar with the environment. During these sessions we talk more in depth about the school and provide an opportunity for the parents to complete the relevant forms that need to be completed for the schools records. This also provides a time to become familiar with the parent and child, developing the positive relationships from the outset.

The second transition that occurs during Early Years is the transition from Nursery to Reception. This jump from part time schooling to full time can be very daunting for both parents and their children and we aim as a Trust to ensure that any transition is

as smooth and comfortable as possible. In order to do this we invite the children to our 'Learning Together' sessions. We invite parents to transition meetings during the summer term to provide them with information about the school, the curriculum and teaching staff. We also have the opportunity to talk about other general information subjects, such as school dinners, reading books and an opportunity to meet their child's new class teacher. We also invite the children to a transition day, which is an opportunity to hook these children into their new project which we give them for the summer holiday in anticipation for when they start school in September.

There are transition meetings planned during the summer term between nurseries and the new class teacher in Reception, allowing the nursery teachers to provide further information about each child's development and pass on any other important information about each child (e.g. medical, SEN, EAL, etc.).

The third and final transition is that between Reception and Year 1. During this transition the children are invited to attend a transition day in which the children are hooked into their new project and have an opportunity to spend more time with their new class teacher. We also have an opportunity for Reception teachers and Year 1 teachers to meet and inform the child's new teacher about each child's level of development, Early Learning Goal (ELG) achievement and any other information about each child (e.g. medical, SEN, EAL, etc.).

Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are happy, healthy, safe, secure. We aim to ensure that all children feel happy, safe and secure through the continuous development of positive relationships between children and staff as well as relationships with their peers. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2024).

Our schools have rigorous safeguarding policies and procedures that are used to identify anyone at risk of harm or radicalisation, this sets out a clear procedure for reporting any concerns from minor to major. All staff are regularly trained in SCB Safeguarding, which is updated on a regular basis. All schools have rigorous checks when employing members of staff, ensuring that they have the relevant qualifications and DBS are checked. All DBS checks are updated on a rolling basis as required.

Supervision of staff

In accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), St Barnabas MAT is committed to implementing regular supervision sessions for all staff who have contact with children and families.

Supervision is a key element of our safeguarding culture and supports staff in reflecting on their practice, identifying professional development needs, and maintaining high standards of care and education. Supervision provides opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being, including safeguarding concerns
- Reflect on their own practice and professional development
- Identify solutions to challenges in practice
- Receive support and coaching to improve the quality of provision

Frequency and Format

Supervision meetings take place at once a year and are conducted in a confidential, one-to-one setting with a senior staff member or designated supervisor. Additional ad-hoc supervision may be arranged if specific concerns or needs arise.

Record Keeping

Brief records of supervision meetings are maintained to document key discussion points, agreed actions, and any support or training needs identified. These records are stored securely in line with data protection requirements.

Confidentiality

While supervision is a confidential process, any safeguarding concerns identified during supervision will be escalated and managed according to our safeguarding policy and procedures.

This structured approach to supervision ensures that our teams remain well-supported, informed, and consistently focused on the best outcomes for the children in our care.

We have an e-safety policy which stipulates and advises how to keep children safe when online, which is available on our website. All staff are regularly made aware of

how to keep safe online, and have training around this. This is also regularly promoted throughout the school during e-safety weeks. The schools as a whole also has a filtering system that blocks any unknown or suspect websites. However, professional judgement is always advised and promoted throughout the schools.

Health and Safety

Within the school we follow a set of guidelines regarding different aspects of Health and Safety.

Healthy school meals – our children when they enter Reception are entitled to a free school meal and are provided with this. The school meals are carefully catered and follow a healthy food model.

Healthy snacks – Fruit and milk are provided and are available throughout Nursery and Reception for children to eat. We also encourage children to try new or more exotic types of food/fruit.

Accidents and First aid – There is a trained Paediatric First aider on site at all times. All first aid cupboards are clearly labelled and regularly updated. All accidents are recorded and parents are informed of any accidents. If a more serious accident occurs (e.g. significant bump, scrape or graze) parents will have a phone call home to inform them as soon as possible.

Nappies – We encourage all parents to ensure their children are potty trained before they start nursery, but in the event that this is not possible, we will put into place a care plan which will ensure that the child is well looked after and regularly changed. We also work alongside the local children's centre to encourage and help parents to potty train their children.

Fire alarms – A fire alarm practice is organised at least once a term and all of these are timed and recorded. We have set fire doors throughout the setting and the fire brigade carries out regular safety checks.

Child Protection and Safeguarding – we have a very clearly set out safeguarding policy, which is available on all our schools' websites.

Appendix 1

Staff Supervision Record Form

The Staff Supervision Record is designed to ensure that key areas are discussed during supervision and protect the working relationship between supervisor and staff member. It may not be necessary to complete every section during every supervision session. However, it is recommended that every session begins with an open slot (welcome) and ends with a summary discussion and evaluation of the session (close) and identify the date of the next meeting.

Name of Supervisor:
Name of Staff Member:
Date:
Welcome: How staff member is generally, what's been happening or pre-occupying staff member, an easing into supervision session.
Review of last meeting. Update on agreed actions from previous session.
Safeguarding: Raise and discuss any concerns regarding a child, family or member of staff and that these concerns will be shared appropriately.
Learning & Development (children) Raise and discuss any L&D opportunities for any child.
Roles & Responsibilities: Raise and discuss work is of a satisfactory standard, identify successes and shortfalls including work reflects the philosophy of early years.
Learning & Development (staff member) Raise and discuss any L&D opportunities for staff member.

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Support: An opportunity for the staff member to raise and discuss any support needed with any problems or difficulties.

Date of Next Meeting: Agree date and time of next supervision session.
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Close: Summarise any agreed actions, establish how the staff member is feeling.

Signature SLT:

Signature Staff member: