



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

GEORGE STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL
"Where Learning Comes Alive"

Approved by:

Head Teacher: Angela Hughes and Governing Body

Last reviewed on: Spring 2025

Next review due by: Spring 2026



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) forms the building blocks to success for every child. It is a framework for the care, learning and development of each individual child and as such addresses how children are given the best possible start to their education to ensure they can flourish throughout their time in school.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children 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
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

This policy is based on requirements set out in the **‘Early years foundation stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers (2024)’** and any future updated versions (expected September 2025)

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- Quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

The four key principles are:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

George Street’s EYFS Unit accepts children from the ages of 3-5. There is a single intake in September for both Nursery (maximum of 25 children) and Reception Classes and at the end of Reception children automatically move up to Year 1 in the main school. Usually, the majority of children in our Nursery class will move into our Reception class, with a small number coming from the surrounding child care settings. Of the children in Nursery whose families qualify, the 30-hour funded place is available for their child.

Areas of Learning

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from January 2024 (and will continue to follow the updated version expected September 2025).

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 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

Our George Street Curriculum

Our aspirational curriculum, built on the EYFS Framework and guidance from the Development Matters, has been developed from a desire to set our children on a path which will help them to achieve the best outcomes in life.

Putting our children at the centre of our curriculum design, we offer a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities that are cumulatively sequenced so children know more and remember more.

We plan to create learning opportunities that ignite children's curiosity, helping secure acquisition of knowledge and skills. We believe children learn best when they see a purpose to their learning which we define through our vision, 'Where learning comes alive'. We know from research that using first hand experiences to immerse children in their learning has many positive outcomes. Our half-termly topics and other enrichment activities, which are carefully aligned to intended outcomes, exemplify this structure in our curriculum.

It is widely accepted that reading has multiple benefits upon children's education and development and as such reading and books are at the core of our George Street Curriculum. Not only do we focus our efforts on the teaching of reading skills, we also enhance our children's learning through carefully selecting rich texts across the curriculum.

Our love of the outdoors is entwined with our curriculum design; using our extensive grounds in Forest School, as well as local facilities, plays a significant part in delivering experiential learning where these authentic experiences help children to draw meaning and realise purpose.

We want our children to be fully rounded individuals with a clear understanding of complex values like equality, friendship, trust and many others. Only by really learning what these values mean will our children be equipped to contribute meaningfully to our community and wider society. As such we would expect the behaviours displayed in both learning and play to exemplify these values.

Ultimately our curriculum, focused on attainment and character building, will set our children up to succeed in this ever-evolving world.

Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas and then begin to develop the specific areas building on this.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. A clear focus is on progression and development of key skills.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Learning through Play

We believe that adults involved in children's play activities need to facilitate and extend the children's learning through the planned play activities. High quality adult interaction is invaluable in extending children's learning, and here at George Street we endeavour to extend the learning through progressive play activities.

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning supported at George Street 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.

Assessment

At George Street, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe and interact with pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These interactions are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. Our EYFS team at George Street use the online platform 'Tapestry' to share learning with parents and/or carers and allows them to share wow moments from outside of school.

We review attainment and progress termly to ensure that we are tracking each child so that we can take action where needed and prepare children for the next stage of their education.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

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
- 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 local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Inclusion

We value all of our children as unique individuals at George Street Primary School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children meet the expected levels of development against the Early Learning Goals.

As a team we:

- Set realistic and challenging experiences that meet the needs of our children.
- Use a wide range of teaching strategies based on the children's learning needs.
- Plan a wide range of opportunities that build upon the children's knowledge, experience and interests in order to develop their confidence and self-esteem.
- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment where all contributions are valued.
- Use resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Monitor children's progress and take action to provide support where necessary.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies if needed. At times, it is necessary for adults to work with children in a small group or on an individual basis outside of the learning environment. We adhere to the ***SEND Code of Practice 0-25 Years statutory guidance*** and when needed, we seek support and help from external support services.

These services may include:

- Educational Psychologist
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Specific Learning Difficulties Base
- Dacorum Educational Support Centre
- Advisory teachers
- School Nurse/Health Visitor
- Family Support Workers
- Attendance Improvement Officer
- Children's Services

Positive Behaviour

At George Street we strive to create a positive, caring environment by promoting our school values of: **Ready, Respect and Safe**. Our positive behaviour policy follows a therapeutic approach, in that we are aiming to promote behaviour which is positive, helpful, and intended to promote social acceptance which also supports and enhances learning. This is characterised by a concern for the rights, feelings and welfare of other people and helps build behaviour which benefits our community and society in general.

We understand the importance of building positive relationships with children and by recognising, acknowledging and celebrating the behaviours that we want to see. This starts from the beginning of the day where we meet and greet the children as they come in. It is very important that positive praise is continued throughout - within class, when moving around the school, during communal times, e.g. assemblies, lunchtime and during break and lunch times.

We believe children will learn to behave in a socially accepted way because they know it is the right thing to do and want to, rather than through a series of sanctions. To harness a change in behaviour we need to understand the roots of the behaviour, not simply suppress, the behaviour.

All staff have the responsibility to create and harness positive behaviour through role modelling and praising pupils they 'catch' demonstrating good behaviours. Classes often develop ways to recognise positive behaviour which will vary depending on the age of the children, e.g. ClassDojo. Staff receive regular CPD on behaviour and other related areas in order to be able to teach behaviour through: - Relationships, Role modelling, Consistency, Routines, Positive phrasing, Planning, Reward and positive reinforcement, Feedback and recognition, Comfort and forgiveness. We work on the ethos that all behaviour is communication.

Parental Engagement

At George Street we aim to give our children the safe, secure environments and relationships they need to become strong, independent beings. We work alongside parents at all times. We recognise and value our parents as the children's first and most enduring educators and as such we encourage full participation in their child's journey through the EYFS. We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

We promote this engagement through:

- The use of 'Tapestry' to share their child's learning and development on a regular basis. This is accessible to all parents at all times and they are also able to add WOW moments from outside of school.
- Holding open sessions which provide an opportunity for parent, children and staff to meet and for families to look around the EYFS Environment.
- Holding a new parent meeting to share key information and documents
- Transition "stay and play" sessions held in the summer term to give children an opportunity to become familiar with their new environment and adults in the class.
- We offer parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress.
- We make sure staff are always available and open to see parents at the beginning and end of sessions where possible.
- Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. Regular discussions, parent consultations and yearly reports help to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person. Their 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. All staff working closely with the children, observe, interact and assess in order to support in the planning of next steps.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, for example by talking to children about:

- The importance of having a healthy, balanced diet
- The importance of brushing your teeth

As a team we work together 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 have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

There may be times when staff are required to have close physical contact with a child. It is also important for the children to feel safe, secure and loved in their environment. We understand that children can react differently to physical contact and we respect this. Staff receive regular training in safeguarding & child protection.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Health and Safety

George Street is a "Healthy School" and actively promotes Health in all forms. Water, milk and fruit are available throughout the day and children are encouraged to make good choices regarding foods and health promoting activities such as exercise and rest.

Staff conduct a daily risk assessment to evaluate the learning environment inside and outside. Furniture and equipment are assessed for safety and any broken or damaged equipment is taken out of the environment immediately and replaced as soon as possible.

The Health and Safety Governor and the Premises Manager undertake regular "walks" around the Whole School Environment to maintain the highest standards.

Medicines, Illness and Injuries

All descriptions of medications and allergies are to be displayed in classrooms with the child's photo where they can be easily accessed by all staff. Any special food requirements or allergies should be displayed in the school kitchen with the child's photo.

All medications must be clearly labelled and kept in a secure place away from the children but within the classroom. Medications may only be administered by qualified first-aiders and requires a written permission slip to be completed by the parents and given to the teacher.

All injuries to children are recorded on Tapestry and parents are informed of the actions taken. Parents are asked to electronically sign each accident record. In the case of an injury to the head, parents are informed by phone as soon as possible in the event they may wish to seek further treatment. Children are also given a sticker to say they have bumped their head so all staff around the school are aware.

Adult Supervision

Ratios and levels of staff qualifications as designated in the EYFS framework are adopted. No adults are allowed to be left on their own with children unless they are DBS checked and approved by the Head Teacher.

Reception to Year 1 Transition

Reception and Year 1 work together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible. Teachers have time to discuss and expand on the information presented in the EYFS profile. In particular, the narrative around the Characteristics of Effective Learning which will give teachers significant details about each child's learning and development.

Reception children meet the Year 1 teacher in the Summer Term of Reception to begin building relationships. The children have the opportunity to visit their new Year 1 class and spend time with their new teacher.

There is a similar structure to the school day during the Autumn Term when the children move into Year 1 as well as an overlap in approaches and routines, e.g. behaviour systems, timetables, etc.

Where possible, the Year 1 children continue to enjoy practical learning experiences which gradually become more formalised towards the end of the academic year.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of all staff to follow the principles stated in this policy. The EYFS Leader is responsible for the implementation of the EYFS and will discuss and monitor effective practice with practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the Governing Body via reports to the Head Teacher.