

Bishops' C of E & R C Primary School



'Live Fully, Laugh Often, Learn Deeply, Love as God Loves You.....and Let Your Light Shine!'

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

<p>The Policy was formally adopted by the Governing Board on:</p>	<p>Date: Autumn 2025</p>	<p>Next Review Date: Autumn 2028</p>
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Introduction

This policy has been written in line with the school's Mission Statement and the Every Child Matters legislation 2003.

At The Bishops' School, the Foundation stage team aim to provide the highest quality of care and education, thereby making it possible for the children to build strong foundations for learning. This enables them to follow and achieve our school motto:

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We aim to create an environment which is safe, happy, motivating and enjoyable. We provide experiences to encourage the children to become creative, independent thinkers and learners who are confident within our school environment.

The Foundation Stage team believe it is vital to have excellent relationships with parents/guardians as this enables the children to reach their full potential as individuals and become part of the school's family life.

The Early Years curriculum is taken from the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, which was published in September 2025.

The Development Matters framework is guidance material to support the practitioners in the Bishops' school, this is non statutory. However, it provides practitioners with support enabling them to provide a broad and balanced curriculum.

There are four themes of the EYFS which reinforces the importance of a balanced play-based approach to learning and development.

The Four themes are:

- **Unique child,**
- **Positive relationships,**
- **Enabling environments with teaching and support from adults,**
- **Learning and development.**

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- Children learn and develop well in **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.
- Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

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Faith

The Bishops' school is unique and special. We strive to provide an environment in which each child knows that they are valued, unique and loved by the staff of the school and by God. This is achieved through daily celebration, whole school worship, song, prayer and RE teaching.

Planning in the Foundation Stage

Planning is in line with that agreed by the school. Learning in the Foundation Stage is through a play based approach, with some adult led activities. When planning, activities are planned for both inside and outside, to ensure that all children have access to all areas of learning through a free-flow method.

Planning is based on the updated 'Development Matters' (2020) and the seven areas of learning which is in line with the EYFS 2025 profile.

Our curriculum encompasses seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected with our school global dimensions.

The seven areas of learning are split into 'Prime and Specific areas'. The Prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The Specific areas give children to strengthen and apply the prime areas.

The Prime areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social, and emotional development.

The specific areas:

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

Throughout their time in the EYFS our children partake in an ambitious curriculum which is designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of reception goals. These goals are defined as Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

The descriptors for these can be found in the appendix.

Our Learning

Our curriculum incorporates learning through play, learning by adults modelling, by observing each other and through guided learning and direct teaching. It is also important to highlight that our plans are flexible to allow us to respond quickly to children's new interests and/or needs.

This means we create an environment which is encouraging for the children to flow freely between inside and outside. Many of our activities are child initiated and some are adult led. We provide the children with

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space and time to develop their own play and guide them through their experiences to ensure they are meaningful and challenging.

Through our play based approach, we develop the children's 'Characteristics of Effective Learning'.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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 teach daily phonic sessions, following the Essential Letters and Sounds program, ELS.

All children are provided with reading books which is in line with the taught sounds, they also receive a weekly library book.

When learning to write, we encourage children to mark make and write within their play. We aim to do one piece of formal adult led writing each week. We teach a non-cursive style of handwriting and encourage children to have a love and enjoyment of writing and write for a purpose.

Assessment and Reporting

Assessment is an integral part of our daily teaching and learning. At The Bishops' School, we undertake ongoing assessments based on all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Assessments are made through:

- Planned and spontaneous observation
- Written and photographic evidence
- Dialogue with children
- Annotated work

Within the first few weeks of the children starting at the Bishops' School the FS team complete 'Base Line' RBA Assessment, which are transferred onto Sonar.

What does the RBA assess? It assess the starting points for pupils in the following areas.

- language, communication and literacy
- mathematics

Pupils will use practical resources to complete these tasks and teachers will record the results on a laptop, computer or tablet. It will not be used to label or track individual pupils. The Bishops' is required to carry out the assessment within the first 6 weeks of pupils starting reception. No numerical score will be shared and the data will only be used at the end of year 6 to form the school-level progress measure.

Children with SEN/additional needs are identified at the earliest possible stage and activities and environments are differentiated accordingly.

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When starting at The Bishops', each child has a book which gradually collates evidence throughout the academic year. This is a collection of observations, photos and work.

In addition to the baselines, three times a year, the Foundation Stage teachers will assess each child, using Sonar, within each area of learning. This data is then analysed to address any children who are not making expected progress or making accelerated progress.

The evidence, alongside teacher knowledge, form the basis of the final end of year judgements. These are then completed and inputted onto Sonar which enables us to make an overall judgement of GLD (Good Learning Development). The final judgements show each individual child either to be, Emerging or Expected across each of the 17 Early Learning Goals.

At the End of the academic year the parents receive a personalised report which explains the development progress achieved by their child, and the final judgement given. They will also receive their child's work/books from the Foundation Stage year at the Bishops' School.

Equal Opportunities

We value all children as individuals at The Bishops' School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace, ensuring our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals to the best of their ability. 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.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Within the EYFS at The Bishops' School we follow the 'EYFS statutory framework 2021' document and the school safeguarding policy. The 'key person/s' are the teaching staff. All safeguarding concerns are reported to the safeguarding lead/deputy lead following our school system.

Health and Safety

Within the EYFS the school's health and safety policy. We have our own FS risk assessments for continuous provision both inside and outside. These are updated when needed and signed and read by all members of the EYFS team and senior management.

ICT

Children have access to a class Ipad and the school's computer suite under the supervision of an adult. These stay in school at all times. The age-appropriate apps that we use have been previously downloaded and checked by our ICT lead. If accessing the internet, this is done with a member of staff present in the ICT suite.

Staff have access to laptops, and the class Ipad. The Ipad stays in school and the photographs are only used as evidence. Photos are not shared without parent consent.

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Parents

The Parent and Teacher Partnership in the EYFS setting cannot function without the enduring support of parents and carers. We recognise that parents are the child's primary educator and we recognise this important role through regular engagement including:

- Initial information and admission meetings for completion of admission forms and to sign permission slips for visits out of school, use of photographs of their child for assessment purposes
- Having a positive relationship for parents to come and speak with staff should they have any concerns.
- Twice annual parents' evenings.
- Parent information sessions. E.g., phonic and maths sessions.
- Events and activities throughout the year which bring together children, parents and the school. E.g., parents clubs.
- Sending activities home for parents to complete with their children.

Transitions

September induction period

Over the years we have adapted and developed our induction process to ensure that all children starting at the Bishops' are giving the opportunity to meet their new teacher, visit the school and nursery visits are successfully arranged. If a child is not attending a preschool setting, all the best efforts are made to speak to the parents prior to their child starting school. When starting school we create a gradual induction process, this ensures that the children are fully settled and ready for their new reception class learning when full time.

We provide information to the new starter children by means of meet and greet with the Head teacher, key links to BCS councillor and PTA links. Once the children have started school and settle the teachers hold class meetings, these are for the parents to find out more about the EYFS curriculum, structure of the school day and the expectations.

Transition to Year 1

In the final term the Year 1 teachers the children have the opportunities in the summer term to visit their new classroom and class teacher, enabling them to become familiar with their new classroom and teaching staff.

The year 1 teachers will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goal and key characteristics, in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children. Children will also receive a transition booklet to support them through the summer holidays with the move to year 1.

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Early Learning Goals

Communication and Language

Listening, Attention and Understanding

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

Speaking

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Understanding the World

Past and Present

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society.
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

People, Culture and Communities

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.

The Natural World

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants.
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-Regulation

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

Managing Self

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

Building Relationships

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creating with Materials

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used.
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

Being Imaginative and Expressive

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher.
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs.
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and (when appropriate) try to move in time with music.

Physical Development

Gross Motor Skills

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing.
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

Fine Motor Skills

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery.
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Literacy

Comprehension

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
- Anticipate (where appropriate) key events in stories.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role play.

Mathematics

Number

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number.
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5.
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

Numerical Patterns

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system.
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity.
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Word Reading

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

Writing

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.