Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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ST ANNE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, DENTON
EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY V1.5

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is delivered in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage published in September 2025.

Early Years Foundation Stage includes children from birth to the end of the Reception year. We usually have a maximum of 30 children in the Reception Class. In our school, the Reception class follow the EYFS guidance, working towards the goals provided in the Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers (updated September 2025) and the Early Learning Goals set out in the Early years foundation stage handbook (updated September 2025). These goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Aims and Principles

Mission Statement:

St Anne's is a caring, supportive and innovative school where everyone is respected and appreciated as an individual. Children are encouraged to be ambitious and aim for brilliance! Our ultimate goal is to create lifelong learners who go on to lead happy and successful lives.

In the Foundation Stage, our aim is to provide opportunities to enable every child to develop their potential mentally, physically, creatively, socially and spiritually in a secure, happy and stimulating educational environment. We aim to provide a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum to all children consistent with National Curriculum requirements. We feel that it is important to promote personal qualities such as motivation, commitment, self-discipline, initiative and self-awareness. We aim to develop a positive partnership between home, school and the community. The Foundation Stage will encourage children to develop caring and considerate attitudes towards others regardless of their learning needs, gender, creed or ethnic and social background.

We aim to make the transition from the Foundation Stage to the next stage of learning (Key Stage 1) as smooth as possible ensuring that children receive a progressive, coherent and continuous programme of learning.

In order to achieve these aims we promote:

- An interesting learning environment in which children feel safe and secure
- Opportunities for children to be actively involved in their own learning
- Opportunities to encourage independence
- Careful evaluations of children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals, which inform planning at all stages

Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from 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

We aim to provide a quality teaching and learning environment that is committed to raising standards and ensuring appropriate challenge for all children.

Early Reading

In EYFS, we cover the three core areas of reading addressed in the DfE document The Early Reading Framework: phonics, comprehension and reading for pleasure.

Phonics is taught using the systematic synthetic phonics approach of 'Monster Phonics'. The children have a daily 30 minute phonics lesson using the scheme only and will sometimes have access to phonics activities as part of continuous provision to consolidate learning. Children who find aspects of the morning phonics session difficult will receive a 'boost' intervention in the afternoon delivered by the teaching assistant from the program. Some children may also take part in weekly 'Rapid intervention' from the Monster Phonics scheme aimed specifically at their current area of weakness.

Monster Phonics reading sessions are taught three times a week in small groups with an adult. These sessions focus on a book perfectly matched to the children's developing phonic knowledge. Multiple readings of the same book ensures a depth of understanding, developing vocabulary and increased fluency.

Home reading books will also be books matched to where the child is within the phonics scheme and should be a book that they can read easily to increase enjoyment, understanding and fluency.

Reading aloud and for enjoyment is encouraged on a daily basis within planned literacy lessons, continuous provision and with a story time timetabled for the end of every day. Texts are deliberately selected to offer opportunities to either expand vocabulary, have a cross curricular link or promote diversity in all its forms.

The classroom has a carefully curated book corner which contains stories which both reflect the children's own lives and experiences and enables them to understand the experiences of others.

Delivery Guidelines

We plan experiences that are relevant, imaginative, motivating and challenging for all children, alongside children's opportunities for regular spontaneous play.

We aim to strike a balance between planned, adult led activities and child initiated play.

Every week, all children will participate in at least one guided draw from Term 2, one English task and at least one maths task- led by an adult. These can vary in delivery between whole class sessions, ability groups, 1:1 or mixed ability groupings.

There will be a teacher led input to the class for maths, English and topic at least three times each week.

We make valuable use of outdoor space to enrich the experiences of the children and enable them to learn on a larger scale than is possible within the classroom environment.

Learning Environment

The learning environment is the physical space where Reception children spend their time. This includes the classroom, hall, toilets, corridors and the outdoor areas. We provide a rich and stimulating environment which values and promotes children's work and achievements, which is well planned and well organised. Relevant displays using both the teacher's and children's work helps provide a place where children can explore, experience, plan and make decisions for themselves.

Curriculum Links

Our long term overview broadly follows some general themes/topics each half term. These will aim to link areas of learning and encourage excitement and enthusiasm in the learning. Specifics of what will be taught in each topic will vary each year depending on the interests and previous experiences of the cohort.

Subject leaders throughout school are aware of where their subject would link in the Early Years curriculum and aim to provide a seamless progression into these subjects from Reception through to the rest of school.

Teaching and Learning

We believe that learning within the Foundation Stage should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which the children can explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, repeat, revise and consolidate their knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes.

We need to challenge children's thinking, building on what they already know, understand and can do, relating this to their previous experiences. They need to be able to link their learning across a variety of experiences through an appropriately planned and differentiated curriculum. They need opportunities to work alongside their peers in pairs, small groups and larger groups as well as on their own.

During the Foundation Stage, the children will be given opportunities to develop their learning through playing and talking with their peers and interacting with adults.

As play is a vital part of the Early Years curriculum, it is important that our planning reflects this. Through play, children can explore and develop learning experiences and make sense of the world around them.

The adults will support children's learning through interacting, questioning, responding and observing. Observations are recorded on the app ‘Tapestry’ and will only be recorded for one of the following reasons:

- The child/adult is particularly proud of the achievement and wants to record it
- The adult feels a small step has been ‘achieved’
- The adult feels a next step needs to be addressed and worked on
- Practical maths activities that are not evidenced in books
- Some general photos that may not be posted on to social media

Strategies used in teaching and learning will respond to the importance of play and have respect for individual needs and will include:

- Clear aims and objectives
- A range of teaching strategies
- A well planned and resourced environment
- Well trained practitioners
- Opportunities to suit all
- Opportunities to build on pupils’ interests
- A partnership with parents/carers
- Relevant observations and targets set

- Positive rewards and reinforcement of rules

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

All practitioners need to evaluate planning in order to check its appropriateness to the setting and its effectiveness on the children's learning. This is done on a daily basis in an informal way. Staff discuss the children in their care on a regular basis to decide what progress has been made, their stage of development and their next steps as either individuals or as a class.

Data is collected four times a year. Children are assessed on entry to Reception using the DfE's Baseline Assessment. A further three times, children will be assessed to be either on track or not, according to the learning we would have expected to take place throughout that term.

Progress is tracked in all areas of learning and data submitted electronically to the Local Authority via the EYFS profile. Literacy, maths, personal, social and emotional development, and phonic development are discussed with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on a half-termly basis and used to inform future planning and interventions.

At the end of the Reception year, a detailed EYFS profile is passed to the Year 1 teacher together with a Learning Journey which provides evidence of work and observations, pupil records and reading logs.

Alongside the annual written report to parents/carers, at the end of the Foundation Stage, parents/carers are also invited to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. Parents/carers are also welcome into the school at any time which is convenient to both them and the class teacher and parents/carers have full access to their child's Learning Journey via the online tool, Tapestry.

We ensure that all achievements are recognised through praise, the sharing of work with the rest of the class and with the giving of Dojo points and stickers. Behaviour management is followed in line with the rest of the school using 'Zones of Regulation', communication and discussion with the child and parents and positive reinforcement.

The Role of the Parent/Carer

We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers, recognising the important part they have as the child's first educators. It is important to keep parents/carers informed of their child's progress, age related expectations and school events.

We achieve this through:

- Reception intake meeting
- Stay and play session Summer before starting school
- Two parents/carers' evenings to discuss settling in and progress

- Reading log books to allow communication
- Annual reports to parents
- Invitations to watch class sharing assemblies
- Invitations to Friday assemblies to share children's achievements made outside school, as well as to see children receiving their certificates
- Invitations to watch the Christmas performance
- Reading and phonics parent workshops
- The school's website and Facebook
- Weekly bulletins on Class Dojo which give ideas of activities to complete at home to compliment learning in school
- Communicating observations to parents/carers through Tapestry

If, for any reason outside this, the parent wants to talk to the teacher, an appointment can always be made to suit both parties. We also encourage active participation for parents/carers throughout the school. This gives parents/carers the opportunity to work alongside children and practitioners within the classroom setting and on school outings and visits.