



Salford Priors CofE Academy

EYFS Policy

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Together, pursuing life in all its fullness



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Purpose

This policy has been written to outline the philosophy, aims and principles of early years teaching and learning in Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust. The document is to be used as a guide and framework to support the individual academy settings.

Aims

The early years phase in our Trust secures the foundation for learning, development and care of each individual child to ensure their future personal and academic success.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the Curriculum as outlined in the 2025 Statutory Framework of the EYFS. The EYFS framework outlines the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning and the 7 areas of Development (CoETL).

The CoETL are organised into three primary strands and are essential components towards children becoming self-regulated learners.

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 achievement.
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

There are 17 aspect areas (early learning goals) within 7 curriculum areas of development. These are divided into Prime and Specific areas of learning.

The 3 Prime areas of learning:

1. Communication and Language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development



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‘Communication and Language’ underpins all areas of learning within our early years curriculum and continues to be developed within our provision, teaching, learning and planning methods. 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. Planned learning supports the progress and development of listening and speaking, enabling children to process information into thinking and understanding. Children practise their physical skills alongside developing social skills, which supports greater independence and higher levels of confidence

The 4 Specific Areas of Learning:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

The 4 specific areas of learning provide a context for development and reflect cultural knowledge and accumulated understanding. They are dependent on learning in the Prime areas. Our ‘Continuous Provision’ demonstrates a strong emphasis upon supporting children’s understanding of the world along with enabling them to express themselves imaginatively and creatively, using art and design. New learning and topics are adapted to reflect the needs of the children and their interests.

A Unique Child

The Statutory Framework for EYFS (2025) states that ‘every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured’. At Salford Priors CE Academy, 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 and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We genuinely value the diversity of individuals within the school and celebrate everyone’s ‘uniqueness’. We do not discriminate in any way, and all our pupils are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion or prior academic attainment. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school, we believe that every child matters. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences



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when planning for their learning.

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 knowledge and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support where necessary.

Throughout the early years, if a child’s progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners must discuss this with the child’s parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Practitioners must consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support.

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.

It is important to us that all children in the school are ‘safe’. We aim to educate children on school and classroom rules (boundaries and limits) to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and emotional well-being of all children. Please also refer to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy as well as our Behaviour and Relationship Policy.

Positive Relationships

The Statutory Framework for EYFS (2025) states that ‘children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. At Salford Priors CofE Academy, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents (including guardians and carers) 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.
- providing opportunities for children to visit our EYFS setting during the half term prior to starting school.



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- 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 are two formal meetings for parents in each year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Foundation Stage.
- inviting parents to curriculum events, book mornings, including opportunities to participate in phonics sessions.
- opportunities to celebrate achievements from home.
- using ClassDojo to share children's learning throughout the year.

Welfare

The EYFS Statutory Framework states that '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'. At Salford Priors CofE Academy, we understand that we are required 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 who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is 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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements (please refer to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for more information).

Health

We are a healthy school, and our children receive free fruit and milk from a government scheme. Pupils in Reception have the option to bring a home packed lunch or to have a free school meal provided by our on-site caterers 'Caterlink', which provides options to support specific dietary requirements. We carry out food tasting and cooking activities regularly and staff have been trained in food hygiene. Throughout the Reception year, children have medical checks for height and weight, flu immunisations, sight, and hearing. Parents have the option to withdraw their children from these checks. We promote good oral health as well as good



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health in general in the Early Years. For oral hygiene we talk about healthy foods and the effects of eating too many sweet things and the importance of brushing your teeth. We take all accidents seriously and always log incidents. All staff are first aid trained. We have policies for illness and medicines. All children are encouraged to start school without nappies, but support is provided for children who are not yet toilet trained. We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' (i.e. wet themselves) and share an intimate care policy and agreement with parents. We keep stocks of spare clothes and assist children who need support. We ask parents to help keep our stocks of clothes high by returning anything their child has borrowed.

Managing Behaviour

All staff are trained in positively managing children's behaviour and follow a whole school approach to enable children to manage their own behaviour and promote successful and positive interactions. Our behaviour policy can be found on our website. Staff have been trained in physical intervention. Parents would be notified in the unlikely event that this has been used.

Safety of Environment

The school grounds and all large climbing equipment is checked by our site officer and fire alarms are held regularly in line with whole school policy. There is an annual external check of equipment.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Staff consider the individual needs, interests, and stages of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences.

Staff are reflective in their practice and systematically observe and evaluate the effectiveness and value of planned provision within the inside and outside learning spaces. They respond to children's levels of interest and engagement, ensuring accurate pitch and pace for developing cognition and learning. Planning and interactions are supported by progressive sequences of questioning to develop thinking, understanding and language for reasoning.

The planning within the EYFS is based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning; however, the teacher may alter these in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. We believe many children need to be given an initial starting point to learn new things and we find a broad theme is a great way to initially fire the imagination. These themes are from the Primary Knowledge Curriculum and feed into subsequent years across their time at school:

- All about Me (I wonder what makes me unique?)
- Transport: Past and Present (I wonder how vehicles have changed?)
- Space (I wonder what it's like in space?)



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- Growing and Changing (I wonder how things grow?)
- Kings and Queens (I wonder who the next King will be?)
- Stories from the Past (I wonder what stories they told in the past?)

We make regular assessments of the children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. In the final term of the year, an EYFS Profile must be completed for each child by the teachers in their setting. This Profile gives parents, carers, and other teachers a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. Each child's level of development must be assessed, making a holistic best fit judgement against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG), indicating whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority. A child who achieves the ELG in each of the prime areas as well as literacy and numeracy is awarded a good level of development (GLD). This information will be provided to parents within their end of year school report.

Enabling Environment

Our EYFS setting is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The New Statutory Framework for EYFS (2025) states that, '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'. The learning environment is set up so that children can find and locate equipment and resources independently. We have our own enclosed outdoor area which is used daily. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language and mathematical skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all areas of learning. During children's play, early years practitioners interact, and model play to stretch and challenge children further. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and ensure these are present in our practice.

Teaching and Learning

Play is essential for children's development, building confidence as children learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems embedded within established routines. Each area of learning and development is implemented through purposeful play, through a mixture of carefully planned adult-led activities as well as child-initiated activities. The environment both indoor and outdoor is designed to provide opportunities for different skills and subject areas. Staff skilfully respond to each child's emerging needs and interests,



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guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Adults continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing, developing learning as well as modelling effective relationships and developing language and are skilled at recognising when and how to support a child. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending or enhancing the learning as appropriate. Adults are adept at responding to 'in the moment' opportunities that arise from initial learning.

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 them 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. They can practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions.

Teaching Strategies

Government Approved Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) Teaching Programme

Daily class phonics is taught from the outset. By ensuring high-quality phonics teaching the government wants to improve literacy levels to:

- give all children a solid base upon which to build as they progress through school.
- help children to develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information.

We use *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* as our Department for Education validated and approved SSP programme, as well as the accompanying, extensive, reading materials to support effective phonics pedagogy throughout Reception and Key Stage 1. This programme draws extensive, excellent practice and on the latest research into how children learn best; how to ensure learning stays in children's long-term memory and how best to enable children to apply their learning to become highly competent readers.

Mathematics Input

Mathematics reflects the mastery approach that is adopted throughout the school and follows the Mastering Number programme. This NCETM programme aims to secure firm foundations in the development of good number sense for all children from Reception through to Year 1 and Year 2. The aim over time is that children will leave KS1 with fluency in calculation and a confidence and flexibility with number. Attention will be given to key knowledge and understanding needed in Reception classes, and progression through KS1 to support success in the future. For Reception, there is an emphasis on subitising, number composition and pattern, which link perfectly to Number and Numerical Patterns. This is supported by resources from White Rose Maths.



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Supporting Key Themes

We aim to build the foundations for children to ensure that they are Year 1 ready for National Curriculum subjects. Foundational knowledge is introduced with engaging themes, that cover ELG in 'Understanding of the World' and 'Expressive Arts and Design', preparing children effectively for KS1. To support this planning, we use EYs resources from the Primary Knowledge Curriculum, which is used throughout school for several non-core curriculum subjects.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher, the MAT's Academy Improvement Partner and subject leaders carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring programme. We are also involved in moderation with other EYFS settings in our Multi Academy Trust and with local schools within our Local Authority Consortium.