Grantham Villages' CE Primary Schools Federation

Marston Thorold's Charity Church of England Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Approved by:	**Full Governing Board**	**Date:**	**November 2025**
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1. Aims

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

1. School Vision

Marston Thorold's:

Through our Christian Values and the legacy of Sir John Thorold, we strive to create an inclusive nurturing family where everyone can flourish, unlock their potential and widen their horizons.

Faith inspires all that we do, ensuring we become responsible global citizens who promote equality and celebrate individuality.

St Sebastian's:

Through our Christian Values, we strive to create an inclusive nurturing community where everyone can flourish, unlock their potential and widen their horizons.

Faith inspires all that we do, ensuring we become responsible global citizens who promote equality and celebrate individuality.

2. Legislation

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' September 2025
- DfE 'Early years foundation stage profile: 2024 handbook'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2025'
- DfE 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff.

- Ensuring that there are appropriate policies, procedures, and practices in place to deliver the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' in line with statutory requirements.

The executive headteacher will be responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with the 'Headteachers' standards' and the expectations of the school community.
- Creating a culture where children experience a positive and enriching school life.
- Upholding ambitious educational standards which prepare children from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life.
- Ensuring teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domains.
- Ensuring valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing children's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, and ensuring effective use is made of formative assessment.
- Understanding and acting within the statutory assessment frameworks which set out the duties, responsibilities and reporting arrangements to be followed.
- Ensuring all relevant staff read and implement this policy.
- Ensuring that staff have received the appropriate training to deliver and report EYFS assessments.
- Ensuring parents are informed about their child's progress, development and targets, and are aware of relevant early years policies, practices and procedures.

The EYFS lead will be responsible for:

- Ensuring all staff members read and implement this policy.
- Ensuring that all staff are up-to-date with current statutory and Ofsted expectations, including the early years team and the SLT.
- Supporting the policies, ethos and vision of the school and actively promoting high levels of achievement in the early years stage.
- Leading the early years team in the planning and delivery of a creative and stimulating curriculum based on the educational programmes of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.
- Ensuring the educational provision and practice is based on the EYFS characteristics of effective teaching and learning, supports a range of learning needs and develops children's independence.
- Taking responsibility for high-quality teaching provision throughout the early years stage.
- Ensuring the requirements for the EYFS, including the arrangement of assessment, are met in line with the relevant statutory requirements.
- Monitoring the progress of children and reporting evaluated data to the headteacher.
- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with parents, colleagues, the governing board and the local community.
- Ensuring parents are informed about their child's progress, development and targets, and are aware of relevant early years policies, practices and procedures.

- Supporting staff development by identifying and/or providing regular training and CPD opportunities.
- Providing regular 1:1 meetings with staff to support professional development.
- Assigning a key person to support the needs of each child and family.

The key person will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that the children they support receive learning tailored to their needs.
- Engaging with parents to support them in guiding their child's development at home.
- Helping families with more specialist support, where required.
- Helping children become familiar with the school and acting as a point of contact for children and their parents.

All teaching staff will be responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Understanding and acting within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.
- Ensuring they have a thorough working knowledge of:
  - The DfE's current 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' and the requirements therein.
  - The DfE's current 'Early years foundation stage profile handbook'
  - The STA's current 'Early years foundation stage assessment and reporting arrangements'.
- Using formative and summative assessments to assess, monitor and report on children's progress, plan next steps and shape learning opportunities.
- Identifying any areas of concern relating to children and their learning, development and emotional needs.

4. Transition EYFS

Grantham Villages' CE Primary Schools Federation (St Sebastian's Church of England Primary School and Marston Thorold's Charity Church of England Primary School) provide education for children aged from 4 to 11 with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children being at 4 to 5 years old.

The induction procedure begins early in the summer term with the Foundation Stage teachers making visits to the nurseries to hold informal discussions with the nursery staff and meet children who will be attending school.

The parents/carers of all children who will be attending either St Sebastian's CE Primary School or Marston Thorold's CE Primary School are invited into the applicable school to attend the initial transition session for children, parents/carers can stay with the children for the first afternoon to help children settle and become familiar with their new environment. The transition sessions are organised into three afternoons where the parents/carers are offered the chance to meet the Executive Headteacher, Head of School, Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and Foundation Stage Staff. The initial transition afternoon is where the induction procedures, general school information and the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum are discussed. The parents/carers will receive the Settling into School Information, School Admissions Form and Health Forms (as required), there is also time for the parents/carers to ask questions and discuss any queries they may have. For the second and third afternoon sessions, we kindly ask parents/carers to leave children so they can independently explore the environment and interact with fellow class

members (please speak to Foundation Stage Teachers if you feel your child is not confident to be left and exceptions can be made).

All children will begin school full time straight away in Autumn term one. The school day begins at 8:50am with gates being open to children from 8:40am where they can begin filtering into their classroom. The school day ends at 3:30pm where parents/carers will pick children up. Children will have a break in the morning session and lunch at 12noon until 1pm.

5. Curriculum

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

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 curriculum has been carefully designed for knowledge to be built upon year on year as children progress through EYFS, Key Stage 1 (KS1) to KS2. Each non-core subject that is part of the national curriculum including Geography, History, Science, Art, Design Technology, PSHE, RE, Music, Computing and PE are mapped into a knowledge progression. This begins in EYFS and progresses through to Year 6. However, discrete lessons will not necessarily be taught in these subject areas as the EYFS encompasses these within its prime and specific areas. It is important to understand how these subject areas are built upon throughout a child's time at school. Knowledge progression maps are available upon request.

5.1 Planning

Foundation Stage Staff will begin their planning using the school long-term plan which will inform medium term plans written in the format of cohort curriculum maps and then leading on to short-term planning. Lessons are planned daily and in detail using a school agreed planning format. Planning will be a mix of both adult-led and child-initiated learning opportunities. Lessons are planned with a clear understanding of our context, and the children's strengths and areas for development. All reasonable steps are made to ensure that the curriculum is ambitious and well taught.

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.

Staff also consider 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.

5.2 Teaching

Phonics and Maths will be taught daily from week two to ensure children are becoming well prepared for when they move into year 1. Systematic phonics is taught using Little Wandle, it is logically sequenced and cumulative with support in place for children who require additional consolidation. The Mathematics curriculum is designed to develop children's confidence about and use of mathematical vocabulary.

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. Staff focus on ensuring children develop their language and vocabulary across all areas of learning and develop their communication skills to express thoughts and feelings.

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.

6. Assessment

Formative assessment is ongoing throughout a child's reception year. Foundation Stage teachers will use both formative assessments and their knowledge of the children to inform their judgements of whether children are not yet emerging, emerging or on-track with the EYFS curriculum at three points throughout the year. These include on entry (baseline), the end of the autumn term (Christmas) and at the end of the EYFS, when the EYFS profile is completed. If staff are concerned with children's level of development parents and the school SENCO will be informed to help highlight any areas that may need additional support or if there are any additional needs.

Ongoing assessment within Grantham Villages' CE Primary Schools Federation are an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This is a statutory assessment imposed by the Department for Education, more information about this can be found via the school website.

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.

8. Inclusion

All children will be valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. The Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will ensure that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.

The EYFS curriculum will be planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy will ensure all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school's SENCO.

9. The Learning Environment

The schools recognise that the physical and emotional environment play an important role in supporting, enabling, and extending pupils' learning and development.

The school will provide a safe and stimulating environment that values active learning, exploration, and play, where children feel free to create, make links and develop critical thinking skills.

Early years practitioners will ensure that learning environments are well-organised and suitable for group, individual and whole class learning, with interactive displays and easily accessible resources utilised to encourage independence.

At all times, children will have access to indoor and outdoor learning environments. Staff will plan provision to ensure that there are a range of learning opportunities available, and that the learning opportunities available in the outdoor environment build on and develop those inside.

Independent learning will be encouraged through planned continuous provision where children can make their own selection from a variety of resourced areas.

Staff will support children to navigate and access the learning environment, intervening and interacting where necessary to ensure that all learning opportunities and teaching moments are captured and capitalised upon.

Appropriate and stimulating educational visits and visitors, from both within and outside of the local community, will be arranged to further expand children's learning experiences.

10. Working with Parents/Carers

We are proud to have a secure and trusting relationship with our parents/carers and throughout the year at different points, parents/carers will be invited into school. Parents evenings will happen 3 times a year with the first being at the end of the child's first half term at school to speak to parents/carers about how children are settling in, if they have any questions and if there are any concerns. Parents/carers are also invited to use Tapestry (at Marston) or Class Dojo (St Sebastian's), our early years observation system. Parents/carers will be invited to create an account shortly after their child starts school, they can view and upload observations of their children and link it to the early year's foundation stage.

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Children will be assigned a key person in school. This will usually be the Foundation Stage Teacher; they will ensure that the child's learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person

supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

11. Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by

- The importance of a balanced diet and not eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

We follow statutory guidance for safety around supervised tooth brushing.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy which is read by all members of our Early Years staff team.

12. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the EYFS lead across the Federation every 2 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of Statutory Policies and Procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See Health and Safety Policy/ First Aid Policy
Administering medicines policy	See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and Asthma Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	Emergency Evacuation Plan
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints Procedures and Policy