



'Growing together in Newtown'

St. George's C of E Academy Newtown EYFS Policy

*September 2024
Reviewed September 2025*

MISSION STATEMENT

We are a Church of England School with a strong Christian ethos. We do not discriminate between children and treat them all as individuals. We offer a wide range of exciting and educational opportunities to enhance skills, talents and creativity. The school community appreciates and accepts others, and celebrates the achievements of all.

Our Christian Values for our school community

From this we have developed our values through a consultation with the community and with the children.

'Growing together in Newtown'

Taking every opportunity

Opening hearts and minds

Growing in confidence and independence

Enriching and inspiring

Thoughtful and forgiving

High aspirations

Engaging with our community

Reaching out to God and to each other

AIMS OF THE SCHOOL

At St. George's C of E Academy Newtown, we aim to:

- give each child a happy, positive, and enjoyable start to their school life within a safe and secure environment.
- establish solid foundations and foster a deep love of learning.
- enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually to thrive in a diverse and ever-changing world.
- offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development.
- offer a broad and rich curriculum.
- encourage children to develop independence within a nurturing and supportive atmosphere.
- support children to build relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements by experiencing success and developing their confidence to work towards personal goals.

1: EYFS Principles

1.1 Effective practice in the EYFS is built on the following four guided themes, which are broken down into four commitments describing how the commitments can be put into practice.

- ***A unique child***
- ***Positive relationships***
- ***Enabling environments***
- ***Learning and development***

1 See Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage – Section 1 (DES 2014)

2: Implementation

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 4 to 5 years.

In our school we have one full-time Reception class. Our reception class can take up 30 children every year and has a full time Each Reception class teacher and a full-time teaching assistant.

3: Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage

3.1 Three of the areas are referred to as the Prime areas. These are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving (Early Years Framework 2023)

The prime areas are:

- **Communication and language**
Listening, Attention and Understanding
Speaking

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

- Self-regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

- **Physical Development**

- Gross Motor
- Fine Motor

The Prime areas are strengthened and applied through the further four areas which are referred to as the Specific areas.

- **Literacy**

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

- **Mathematics**

- Numbers
- Numerical patterns

- **Understanding the World**

- Past and present
- People, culture and communities
- The Natural World

- **Expressive Arts and Design**

- Creating with materials
- Being imaginative and expressive

3.2 We deliver systematic synthetic phonics teaching, reading and intervention through the Little Wandle Early Reading scheme. The teaching of mathematics is guided by the NCETM Maths Mastery and White Rose schemes of learning. Our whole school Talk for Writing approach begins in Reception.

3.3 EYFS Curriculum

Our school curriculum begins with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), rooted in the educational programmes outlined in the Statutory Framework. Through meticulous planning and expert guidance from subject leads, we ensure children develop the essential skills and knowledge for a smooth transition into Year One and beyond. Engaging, challenging, and stimulating activities, enriched by high-quality texts and carefully designed continuous and enhanced provision, foster an inspiring learning environment. The curriculum follows a sequential, cohesive approach, further supported by *Birth to Five Matters*.

Our curriculum is broad, balanced, and progressive, collaboratively crafted with subject leads across the school. This approach guarantees that every child builds a strong foundation of skills and knowledge, equipping them for future success.

3.4 Play

Learning through play is at the heart of our approach to teaching in the Foundation Stage. We believe that young children learn best through activities and experiences that engage their interests and inspire curiosity. Our Reception classroom and outdoor areas are carefully designed with distinct learning zones, providing continuous provision that builds on the experiences children have gained in Nursery or Pre-

School settings. This environment encourages active, stimulating play that fosters creative and critical thinking, both individually and alongside their peers.

Continuous provision allows children to practice skills, revisit prior learning, and explore new concepts at their own pace and level. Through play, children can pursue personal interests, spark new ones, inspire others, and consolidate their understanding of key skills. They develop essential life skills such as adapting, negotiating, communicating, problem-solving, investigating, and asking questions.

Our educators play an active role in child-initiated play, observing, modelling, and questioning to extend learning and support skill development. They enrich and enhance play experiences, helping children grow in confidence, knowledge, and language.

We recognize the equal importance of outdoor play. Our outdoor classroom provides opportunities for 'bigger,' 'louder,' and 'messier' experiences, which are essential for holistic development. As a result, we ensure children have access to outdoor learning areas throughout the school day, promoting a well-rounded, dynamic learning experience.

3.5 Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' which help practitioners identify a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are:

- **Playing and Exploring**- children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'.
- **Active Learning**- children concentrate and keep trying if they encounter difficulties, they enjoy achievements.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically**- children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

3.6 Teaching

We ensure a balanced approach to learning in the Foundation Stage, combining child-initiated learning through continuous provision with adult-led activities throughout the school day. While a percentage of time allows children to initiate their own learning, the role of the adult is crucial. Our educators respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions. They model, demonstrate, and engage in conversations to deepen and embed learning. At times, an adult may invite a child to complete a task together; at other times, they join in the child's play, extending and enriching it where possible. We view our Early Years staff as "co-adventurers" alongside the children.

Daily routines provide structure, including designated times for focused learning in maths, literacy, phonics, stories, and subject-specific lessons. These group sessions help children develop key social skills like listening, turn-taking, and concentration while learning to work collaboratively. The knowledge and skills gained from direct teaching are then applied and extended during child-initiated activities.

Reading and storytime are integral parts of each day, fostering a lifelong love of reading. Children are exposed to a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, designed to engage and inspire, while also introducing and consolidating new vocabulary. We follow the Talk for Writing approach, using high-quality texts to teach writing. Whole-class story sessions occur at least once a day, with additional opportunities for children to explore books independently during continuous provision.

In Reception, each child is provided with a book bag and, at the end of each week, they take home the Little Wandle reading book they have focused on during daily lessons. Children also participate in reading challenges, further promoting their love for books and literacy development.

4: Inclusion in the Early Years Foundation Stage

4.1 In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning (see our policy on school inclusion) and providing 1-1 intervention sessions and small group intervention sessions, to provide extra support where needed and integration workers where relevant.

4.2 In the Early Years Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that they achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage.

Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

4.3 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 ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills; • Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This involves speech and language therapy for some of our children.

5: Assessment

At St. George's, ongoing assessment is a vital part of the learning and development process in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). We follow a continuous Observation, Assessment, and Planning (OAP) cycle to ensure each child's learning needs are met. In collaboration with parents, we observe how children learn, their developmental progress, and the skills and knowledge they have acquired, as well as identifying areas for future development.

Assessment is based on these observations and discussions with parents, allowing us to determine the next steps in each child's learning journey. This informs our planning for lessons, activities, and provision, helping to revisit, embed, or extend learning.

Throughout the Reception year, we regularly assess each child's progress. During the first half-term, teachers use an initial assessments to evaluate each child's abilities, and helps identify patterns of attainment across the cohort. Individual targets are then set, and this data is used to adapt the teaching programme for both individual children and groups. This initial assessment is shared with parents during the October consultation meeting.

Assessment remains ongoing, and all observations and evaluations are recorded in each child's learning journal, which may include photographs, work samples, and detailed observations. These assessments are systematically matched to the Early Learning Goals and tracked in the EYFS Profile, a statutory requirement completed at the end of Reception. Children are assessed against 16 early learning goals, categorizing their development as either:

Expected – meeting expected levels of development

Emerging – not yet reaching expected levels of development

If there are any concerns about a child's progress, particularly in the prime areas of learning, our practitioners work closely with parents to agree on the best course of action to support the child's development. This ensures that every child receives tailored support, fostering their ongoing growth and success.

5.1 Parents receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June and send them to parents in early July each year. Targets are set for the transfer to Year 1 and are shared with both new staff and parents. This is shared with the Year1 team as part of our transition to Year1 discussions with staff.

6: Parent Partnership

The role of parents

6.1 We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. Parents are made to feel welcome and valued in their dealings with all members of staff. 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;
- The teacher visits all children in their Playgroup or Nursery setting prior to their starting school;
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- 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. If needed a meeting will be set up between the staff and parent/carer so that any issues can be resolved quickly. There is a formal meeting for parents in the Autumn and Spring term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- Having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;

- Arranging for children to start school over the first week of term. We stagger the starting time of each child over this period, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school. We encourage parents to stay if there are problems with the child's admission;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- Offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's Reading Record diary. We invite parents to curriculum workshops to discuss the kind of work that the children undertake in the Reception class. Regular Newsletters are sent so that parent/carers are informed of whole school issues. These are also available on the school's website.
- Holding parent workshops in the first term to provide the parents with ideas in how to support their child's learning in the home.

7: Safeguarding

7.1 It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. 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.

We educate children on the importance of boundaries, rules and limits and we encourage them to become responsible for their own behaviour by supporting them to make the right choices. We teach the children how to recognise and manage risks in a supervised learning environment.

7.2 Qualifications – Reception staff will consist of a fully qualified (QTS) teacher and a teaching assistant. There will be a ratio of at least 1:30 (QTS to pupils).

A Paediatric First Aid trained member of staff is on site at all times.

Statutory regulation The Early Years Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements (para 3.4) require all schools to have a clear policy on the use of mobile phones and devices.

7.3 PERSONAL DEVICES

Use of personal digital devices by staff and volunteers

- Personal mobile phones/digital devices are stored in staff lockers and never used whilst children are present.
- Staff can use mobile phones or digital devices in the staffroom during breaks/noncontact time
- When staff and volunteers are using mobile phones/digital devices outside of working hours due regard should be shown to their professional role, in line with our policies

Use of personal digital devices by visitors and contractors

- All visitors and contractors are asked to refrain from using personal mobiles and digital devices when they arrive on site in the presence of children.
- Visitors should seek permission from the Headteacher to use their mobile phones, cameras and technological devices where children are present.

Use of personal digital devices by parents and guardians and other family members

- During some school events, parents, relatives and guests may be given permission to use their own devices but must only video/photo their children.
- If others are videoed/photographed they must have the permission of their parents or legal guardians.

The use of digital devices should be used in accordance with BDMAT Acceptable use of ICT Policy.

7.4 Safeguarding pupils

As a school we will be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. If we have concerns regarding a child's welfare or safety, we will implement policy and procedures in line with our Child Protection policy available on our school website and KCSIE 2024.

The DSL for St. George's C of E Academy is Dionne Cameron- Headteacher and there is several Deputy DSLs- see safeguarding page of the school website and Child Protection Policy.

7.5. Administering medication

Staff are trained in the administration of medication there a member of staff in Reception who is Paediatric First Aid trained. Training is reviewed regularly. Medication is administered in line with the school medication policy available on the school website. Prescription medicines are not administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist.

7.6. Food and Drink

All meals, snacks and drinks available to Reception children are healthy, balanced, and nutritious. On entry to school, we collate information about any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies.

Children in EYFS have access to fresh drinking water at all times and snacks. Children have access to fruit snacks, which they help themselves to and require no preparation by staff. School dinners are prepared in line with food hygiene guidelines in the school kitchen through our catering provider- Sodexo.

While children are eating, they will be within sight and hearing of an adult at all times in line with the EYFS framework 23.

7.7 Accident or Injury

A First Aid bag is accessible at all times in EYFS with appropriate content for use with children. A written record of accidents or injuries and first aid treatment is completed in line with our school First Aid policy available on our school website. All medications, accidents, injuries and first aid treatment are recorded on Evolve our school management system.

Parents/Carers are informed of any accident or injury sustained by the child on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, and of any first aid treatment given.

7.8 Managing behaviour

Behaviour is managed in line with our school behaviour policy for all pupils' in EYFS. See our school website for our behaviour policy.

7.9 Risk assessments

Reasonable steps are carried out to ensure staff and children in EYFS are not exposed to risks through thorough risk assessments in line with school health and safety policy available on the school website.

For school visits, risk assessments are carried out in line with the school educational visits policy and all risk assessments are completed and uploaded to Evolve Ratios are checked prior to the visit, and both of these are checked by the school EVC Coordinator who is the Headteacher- Natasha Johnson.

Please refer to our school's policies: Safeguarding and Behaviour for further information.

This policy will be reviewed by the Local Academy Board - LAB, every year.