

Christ Church NW1

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



January 2024

Vision and Values



The Christian faith is at the heart of our school community.

At Christ Church we all care, learn and work together for God and others.

'For we are all God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do'. Ephesians 2:10

Our Christian Values are

Creation, Community, Endurance, Thankfulness, Reconciliation, Wisdom

The distinctive nature of our approach to education can be found in our explicit Christian values, our collective worship, our grounded Christian ethos, our carefully crafted curriculum and in our Religious Education.

We aim to provide ambitious learning opportunities, promoting achievement in every area and nurturing social, emotional and spiritual well-being.

We actively promote the children's cultural capital (defined as the acquisition of skills and knowledge, which an individual can draw on to give them an advantage in life). We will introduce them to strong role models who will impart their knowledge and wisdom to help the children engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement and to become responsible local and global citizens.

Character and resilience are the qualities we promote within our children, developing the inner resources that we call on to help us in life. We instill these qualities in our children to make sure that they are ready to make their way in the world as robust, confident and inquisitive individuals.

We know that confidence, knowledge and skills will help them to become compassionate and well-balanced young people. We want them to take their place in society as active citizens, economically independent, exemplifying the British values of equality, mutual respect, democracy, individual liberty and rule of law.

We use our six Christian values, Creation, Wisdom, Thankfulness, Community Endurance and Reconciliation, to reinforce and enrich our teaching wherever applicable.

- **Creation**

For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. Hebrews 3:4

- **Wisdom**

For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. Proverbs 2:6

- **Thankfulness**

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. 1 Chronicles 16:34

- **Community**

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. John 15:12

- **Endurance**

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9

- **Reconciliation**

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. Colossians 3:13

Our vision is inclusive and seeks to promote the whole child thrive within our Christ Church family.

Each member of our Christ church family; children, parents and staff are valued as God's creation. We believe in full inclusion and acceptance of all and that this allows every individual to flourish.



CONTENTS

1. Introduction	5
2. A Unique Child.....	5
3. Inclusion	5
4. Welfare.....	6
5. Transitions.....	7
6. Positive Relationships	8
7. Parents as Partners	8
8. The Key Person.....	8
9. Behaviour	9
10. Physical Intervention	9
11. Enabling Environments	9
12. Observations, Assessment and Planning	9
13. The Learning Environment.....	11
14. Learning and Development.....	11
15. Play and Exploration	11
16. Creative and Critical Thinking	12
17. Areas of Learning.....	12
18. Staff in EYFS.....	12
19. Safeguarding	13
20. Ratios.....	13
21. Language	13
22. Training	13
23. Fitness for Work.....	14

Date: January 2024

FGB Approved:

Review date: September 2025

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) extends from birth to the end of the Reception year. Entry into our Nursery is in the term following their third birthday. Children enter Reception in the September following their fourth birthday. However, compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.

The EYFS is based upon the following four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Christ Church, we believe that every child is a competent learner who can be capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Every area of development- physical, cognitive, linguistic, spiritual, social and emotional – is equally important.

Inclusion

The diversity of individuals and families is valued and respected. No child or family is discriminated against. All children are listened to and valued at Christ Church. They are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or ability.

Practitioners in the EYFS must ensure that their own knowledge about different cultural groups is up to date and consider their own attitudes to people who are different from themselves.

We recognise that some children's development may be at risk. Such children include those who are disabled, those with special educational needs, children from socially excluded families, children from linguistically diverse backgrounds and children of asylum seekers or refugees. Children with such backgrounds will be carefully considered and planned for.

Children for whom we receive additional funding in the form of Pupil Premium will receive additional support. The Pupil Premium may be spent in different ways to support children. For example, additional adult support may be funded through Pupil Premium money, as may educational visits or resources for schemes that support a child's development in a certain area, such as Box Clever to promote speech and language development.

Early support is important for children who are not developing as expected. Therefore, identifying the need for extra support early on is crucial. Conversations with parents and carers regarding support for children must always be sensitive and involve a two-way exchange of information. Extra support for a child may take place within the classroom,

and/or help from specialists may be sought. In such cases, the classroom teacher will liaise with the SENCO to ensure that help is received (see Inclusion Policy for more details.)

In the EYFS we have realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. 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.

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;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Welfare

At Christ Church, we recognise that children's health is an integral part of their emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual well-being. We support children's health by ensuring they have a clean and safe environment when at school, appropriate clothing for activities and access to the outdoors.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and 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 psychological wellbeing of all children.

In line with Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for group and school based providers (January 2024), There must be at least one paediatric first aid trained member of staff on the premises at all times. There must also be a paediatric first aider on all educational visits. All staff who obtained a level 2 and/or level 3 qualification since 30 June 2016 must obtain a PFA qualification within three months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff:child ratios at level 2 or level 3 in an Early Years setting. To continue to be included in the ratio requirement the certificate must be renewed every 3 years.

Transitions

One of the ways in which we aim to provide stability for children and make them feel safe is through management of transitions.

When starting Nursery:

- parents and carers can attend a new parent/carer meeting and have a tour of the school.
- parents and children are invited to spend an afternoon in our setting as part of their transition.
- parents and carers can choose between a meeting in their own home or at school. The aim of this meeting is for parents and carers and practitioners to share information about the child.
- children may have a staggered settling in, meaning that on their first day they attend for only an hour and this is gradually built up until they attend school full time.
- practitioners meet with staff at previous settings that the child has attended, if they have been to a Nursery before.

The transition from Nursery to Reception is made smoother for children who attend our Nursery as Nursery and Reception children share the outdoor area. They also spend some time in the Reception classroom in the summer term, before moving to Reception in September.

For children starting reception who have not attended Christ Church nursery:

- parents and carers can attend a new parent/carer meeting and have a tour of the school.
- parents and carers are invited to a meeting in school. The aim of this meeting is for the practitioner and parents/carers to share information about the child.
- as part of transition, the child is invited to spend a morning or afternoon in the reception class in the summer term before starting in September.

Children are prepared for the move from the EYFS into Key Stage 1 in the following ways:

- children in Reception begin to go to the main playground at lunchtimes when they are confident enough (usually in the summer term.)
- in the summer term, children will spend time in the year 1 classroom, getting to know their new environment. Whenever possible, they will spend this time with their new class teacher.
- in the autumn term of year 1, children will still have access to a play-based curriculum to ensure continuity.

Positive Relationships

At Christ Church, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from a base of secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We also seek to show children how to interact with one another by providing positive role models.

Parents as Partners

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years setting, the results have a positive impact on children's learning and development.

We aim to build a positive relationship with families by:

- ensuring that each child has a named key person (in nursery) whom the parent or carer can discuss their child with.
- being available to speak with parents and carers on an informal basis at the beginning and end of the school day, and making appointments to meet to discuss issues in depth.
- offering a visit to all families within their home before the child starts school.
- inviting all parents and carers to a meeting in the term before their child starts school.
- holding settling in meetings with parents and carers six weeks after their child has started school to seek their views on how their child has settled and gain information on how to help their child further.
- having a staggered settling in process which ensures children feel safe and secure.
- ensuring that children have an extended settling in period if this is beneficial to their well-being, and discussing this with parents and carers.
- holding regular stay and play sessions, during which parents and carers are invited to spend time at school, playing with their children and looking at their progress in the portfolio.
- inviting parents and carers to come on out of school trips, to watch class assemblies and come to Sports Day.
- encouraging parents to contribute to portfolios.

The Key Person

All staff will build positive relationships with all children. However, each child will also have a named key person. In Nursery, this will be the Nursery manager. In Reception, the class teacher is the key person for all children. The key person has special responsibilities for working with a small number of children, giving them the reassurance to feel safe and cared for and building relationships with their parents.

The key person will:

- support children with settling into the environment, and prepare them for transitions.
- take responsibility for the child's assessment, including the portfolio.
- plan or suggest activities which cater for the child's needs and interests.
- share information with the child's parents and/or carers.

However, given that there will be times when a child's key person is not available, and that it is essential all staff in the EYFS work together, it is not expected that the key person solely will carry out these tasks. All staff record observations for all children, contribute to planning, comfort and interact with children and communicate with parents.

Behaviour

At Christ Church, we promote the positive behaviour of all children. We praise and reward children for behaving in a positive manner, and explain what positive behaviour looks like.

Sometimes, in extreme cases of inappropriate behaviour such as hitting and otherwise hurting others, children may need to be sanctioned in order to help them understand the consequences of their behaviour. Such sanctions may include spending time in another class or having 'time out' in class but away from other children. This time will always be in proportion to the child's age, so that if the child is 3 years old they will receive a 3 minute 'time out', for example. Following the 'time out', an adult will speak to the child about how to behave positively in the future.

Physical Intervention

On very rare occasions, physical intervention may be required to ensure the safety and well-being of all children. Examples of this may include removing a child from an area if they are about to be hit by a falling object, or lifting a child up to remove them from a situation if they are hitting another child. All cases of physical intervention are recorded and will be reported to parents on the same day, or as soon as is reasonably practicable. (See physical interventi

Enabling Environments

'Children are unique and holistic learners, thriving within environments that support their individual and diverse motivations, interests and needs. They require a wealth of possibilities within varied contexts, and this is best supported within stimulating and challenging environments that value exploration and play.'

Birth to 5 Matters (2021)

Adult led and independent activities are planned for and resourced for the inside and outside areas. Children have access to high quality resources in both the inside and outside environment, which is accessible every day, regardless of the weather.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Long term planning consists of broad themes for the year. Activities around this theme are then recorded on the medium term plan for each half term. These activities are then included in weekly short term plans.

However, it is children's interests and needs which really guide short term planning. Practitioners will begin by observing children to ascertain their interests, areas of strength and development needs. They will plan to meet children's needs and carry out the process again – observing, assessing and planning.

Observations are often carried out incidentally, a practitioner will record something a child has said or done if they feel it shows significant progress or achievement by the child. Some observations are planned for and involve a practitioner observing a child for a specified period and assessing the learning and understanding demonstrated by the child. Observations may be carried out during focused activities which are led by an adult, or whilst the child is playing freely.

Observations make up formative assessment in the EYFS. Summative assessment is carried out once a term. Summative assessment is carried out by looking through the non-statutory 'Birth to 5 Matters' document and deciding which range is the 'best fit' for each child in each area. For example, it may be decided that, in the Making Relationships strand of PSED, a child is working within range 5. It is then up to practitioners to decide whether a child is 'emerging' in that range, 'working within' it or that they are 'secure.' Practitioners must use their professional judgement and knowledge of the child to support them in doing this.

Practitioners judgements of children's attainment is moderated in the following ways:

- in school during EYFS meetings, when all members of EYFS staff contribute to summative assessment decisions. These meetings take place termly.
- in school during whole staff meetings when teaching staff moderate judgements. This meeting takes place yearly.
- with 6-8 other Camden schools during moderation locality cluster meetings. These meetings occur termly.
- with other Camden schools during Local Authority moderation sessions. These meetings take place yearly.

At the end of Reception, all children are assessed against the seventeen Early Learning Goals. The Early Years Leader, with input from other staff in the EYFS, shall decide whether each child has met the Early Learning Goal in each strand and is therefore at the 'Expected' level or 'Emerging' for each Early Learning Goal.

A brief written summary of children's progress is sent to parents or carers in the Spring term. This is followed by a more detailed report in the Summer term. Parents of children in

Reception shall be informed of whether their child has met, exceeded or is emerging towards the Early Learning Goals.

The Learning Environment

A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces. The Nursery and Reception classrooms are organised in a way which encourages children to be as independent as possible. The classrooms have areas which promote learning in all seven areas of the curriculum and allow children easy access to resources.

Teaching and learning takes place in a range of contexts, including adult-led, small group activities, one-to-one work and some whole class sessions on the carpet. However, time for children to choose activities and play independently is crucial as this is the time when they can apply their knowledge and learning.

Children in the EYFS also have access to an outdoor area. We recognise that being outdoors has a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and helps all aspects of children's development. It also offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. Outdoor play offers children the freedom to explore, use their senses, and be physically active and exuberant. It gives children first-hand contact with weather, seasons and the natural world, and therefore children use the outdoor area regardless of the weather, with appropriate clothing supplied and worn.

Learning and Development

'Young children's development does not follow a predictable step-by-step sequence, and each child will have their own unique pathway, progression and momentum.'
Birth to 5 Matters (2021)

Play and Exploration

Play is of utmost importance to young children and their learning. Through play, children can try things out, solve problems, take risks and use trial and error to find solutions. They build upon their own experiences to learn new concepts and skills. Through playing with others, children also learn how to interact with others.

Practitioners plan for and support children's play, and always intervene if play is racist, sexist or in any way unsafe, violent, bullying or offensive. By getting involved in children's play, practitioners can also extend and develop children's language and communication skills.

Creative and Critical Thinking

Creativity must be encouraged throughout the curriculum, not just in the arts. There may not be an end outcome such as a picture, song or play, and it is difficult for children to be

creative if they are making a piece of work which looks just like everyone else's. Practitioners at Christ Church encourage children's creativity by talking them through processes and getting involved in thinking with children. Adults must show genuine interest in what children are doing, offer them encouragement and ask open questions. Practitioners also support children exploring by allowing them to transport resources around the indoor and outdoor areas, using them in new ways.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS curriculum consists of seven areas of learning. All seven areas are equally important and are inter-related. For example, handwriting, which falls within the area of Literacy, is closely linked with the skills of being able to hold an implement in one hand, which is covered in Physical Development.

However, there are three areas of learning which children must develop first in order for other learning to take place. These three areas are called the **prime** areas of learning and are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

The other four areas of learning are called the **specific** areas and are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All areas are delivered through a balance of independent and adult-led activities. In each area, the 'Development Matters' objectives state what is expected of children at different ages, whilst the Early Learning Goals outline what children are expected to achieve by the end of their time in Reception.

Staff in the EYFS

The main aim of all staff working within the EYFS at Christ Church is to promote the learning, well-being and overall development of all children.

Safeguarding

All staff working in the EYFS shall have up-to-date safeguarding policy and be familiar with the school safeguarding policy.

Ratios

In the Nursery class, which is attended by children aged three years and above, there must be one adult with Qualified Teacher Status or an equivalent level 6 qualification. There must be one adult for every 13 children. To count within the ratios at level 3, staff holding an Early Years Educator qualification must also have achieved a suitable level 2 qualification in English.

The Reception class is subject to the School Admissions (Infant Class Size) Regulations 2012 which state that there must be one adult with Qualified Teacher Status and no more than 30 children.

Language

One of the main aims of staff working in the EYFS is to promote the speech and language development of children. It is crucial that staff working in the EYFS have sufficient understanding and use of English to ensure the well-being of children. For example, staff must be able to summon help in an emergency, keep records and understand instructions for the administration of medicines in English, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for Group and School based providers; 3.34 (2024)

Training

Christ Church will ensure that all staff working in the EYFS receive training in child protection and safeguarding, and that all staff are aware of our emergency evacuation procedure, health and safety issues and our Equality Policy. Staff shall also be supported in understanding their roles and responsibilities.

The teachers and Nursery Manager will attend weekly INSET sessions on Mondays from 3:45-5:00pm. All staff working in the EYFS will attend fortnightly EYFS meetings, which includes planning, assessment and training, on Tuesdays from 3:35 – 4:15 pm.

In addition to this, staff are encouraged to attend training sessions led by the Local Authority, London Diocese Board for Schools and other external providers. The training may be identified as an area of development by the EYFS leader or SLT. Alternatively, a staff member may request that they attend a course which would support them in meeting a Performance Management target or an area of development in the EYFS action plan, for example.

Fitness for Work

Practitioners must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If practitioners are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, those practitioners should seek medical advice.

The EYFS leader and SLT must ensure that those practitioners only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly. Staff medication on the premises must be securely stored out of the reach of children at all times.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of all staff in the EYFS to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher will monitor its effectiveness.