



ST JAMES
Preparatory School

**Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
2023-2024**

Reviewed by	EYFS Coordinator
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'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.

A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021

Introduction

At St James Prep we believe that all our children matter and have talents. We also recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. We give our children every opportunity to discover their talents so that they may lead useful and happy lives. We do this by providing an inspiring and well-balanced curriculum which develops the intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual aspects for each child, and by taking into account the life experiences of our children when planning lessons. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as commendation assemblies and rewards to encourage children to develop a positive attitude. We aim to develop independent and motivated children who are confident, capable and growing in awareness and consideration for the needs of others. This creates a confident and happy community where the unique qualities of all are celebrated. The philosophical approach of St James Prep has one overriding principle. It is the proposition that every human being shares the same essence which is divine and full of knowledge, consciousness and happiness.

We aim to provide an environment of love and care in which we explore and celebrate the qualities that define and unify us all, and a curriculum which develops the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects for every child. This creates a confident and happy community where all are valued, encouraged to develop their own talents and are kept healthy and safe. The children are introduced to the practice of beginning and ending activities in stillness. We aim to 'bring out the best' in each child.

A Unique Child

At St James Prep School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. 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/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at St James Prep School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

St James Preparatory and Nursery School

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.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of all our pupils, 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.

In line with EYFS principles, at St James Prep and Nursery we aim to meet the needs of all our children by:-

- Providing quality and consistency in both the Nursery and Reception classes
- Having a key person approach which develops close relationships with individual children in Nursery
- Providing a secure and safe learning environment, indoors and out in the EYFS.
- Providing a balanced curriculum for all
- Planning challenging and enjoyable learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation, assessment, and the child's interest
- Providing opportunities for children to engage in activities that are both adult-initiated and child-initiated
- Working in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every pupil is included and supported

The Team

Head of Nursery	Hannah Slater	PGCE with QTS
Head of EYFS	Hannah Slater	PGCE with QTS
Nursery Teacher	Abigail Chetwin	PGCE Foundation Phase
Nursery Assistant	Carla Fortune	Level 3
Reception Teacher	Katie Baillieux	PGCE with QTS
Reception Teacher	Bonnie Laird	PGCE
Reception Teaching Assistant	Amponsah-Tawiah	Level 3
Reception Teaching Assistant	Celeste Boekkerink	Postgraduate

The EYFS team meet formally once a week to discuss planning for the week ahead. We discuss any Pastoral, Health and Safety issues, effective practice, internal moderation, and any other issues that have arisen. There is an excellent spirit of teamwork within the Early Years Team and we are developing more formal opportunities for coaching and training on an individual basis. The identified EYFS Governor (Angela Bowman) is invited to attend EYFS team meetings such as, the internal moderation meetings and other meetings over the course of the school year.

The Early Years Curriculum

Using the important and inter-connected Prime and Specific Areas of learning from the Statutory Framework for Early Years, we plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of the children’s needs, interests and stages of development. In planning and guiding pupil activities, we reflect on the different ways that pupils learn and ensure we are enabling them to explore, create and think critically and be active. Schemes of work are based on a series of topics, offering experiences across the Prime and Specific Areas of learning, using both the inside and outside learning areas. We follow the pupils’ interests, and this is reflected in our planning. We continually draw on our links with the community to enrich their experiences by taking them on visits and inviting engaging speakers and workshop providers into the school. The Prime Areas are crucial in igniting the pupils’ curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The four Specific Areas enable the Prime Areas to be strengthened and applied.

Prime Areas of Learning			
Personal Social and Emotional Development	Physical Development	Communication and Language	
Self-regulation Managing Self Building Relationships	Gross Motor Fine Motor	Listening, Attention and Understanding Speaking	
Specific Areas of Learning			
Literacy	Mathematics	Understanding the World	Expressive Arts and Design
Comprehension Word Reading Writing	Number Numerical Patterns	Past and Present People, Culture and Communities The Natural World	Creating with Materials Being Imaginative and Expressive

We strive to ensure our 4 CORE learning areas (caring, openness, responsibility and elasticity) are embedded in our daily practice as these provide strong values for our pupils.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Nursery and Reception teachers plan activities within their classrooms with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child’s attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. (In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately EYFS 2021).

The three characteristics 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 achievements.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

PSED

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

In Reception – A program called SCARF is used to cover the PSED framework.

In Nursery – We use circle times, topics, feeling charts and what would you like to learn about walls to cover the PSED framework.

Planning in the EYFS

Reception

Reception has a long-term plan, which highlights what the class will cover over the coming year. This highlights what topics will be taught, the skills they will acquire over the seven learning areas and when each topic will be taught.

The Team then have Mid-term plans, this helps outline what will be taught each term.

The short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson. These plans are tailored to the children and will always fit with the children's needs.

Nursery

The Nursery plan the curriculum in two phases. We agree a long-term plan which revolves on a two-year basis. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term, and the skills and concepts that are suggested to be taught in each of the seven learning areas. The Nursery reviews our long-term plan on an annual basis.

Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson.

The Learning Environment

Our setting provides children with a safe Learning Environment. We understand that when children's physical and emotional needs are met, they are more ready to take

advantage of the play and learning opportunities on offer. Through building positive relationships with the children, we enable them to learn. When children feel confident and secure in the environment, they are willing to try things out, knowing their effort is valued.

In order to ensure that children's experiences and our teaching matches the needs of the children, we observe children carefully and gather evidence of their interests, development and learning in a range of ways. These include -observations, learning journeys and dialogue with parents. Careful analysis of this information will be used to: identify and track the children's progress across the seven areas of learning and development; highlight children's achievements or their need for further support; and most importantly to plan the next steps for children.

We provide an enriching environment both inside and out. The Nursery's outside space is a large area which is made good use of by both Reception and Nursery. Reception also has a courtyard, just off their classroom as well as a large playground which is used for break time 3 times a day. In the EYFS we move learning between the different areas as much as possible. Being outside has a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and our outdoor environments are resourced to support all seven areas of learning and development. For example, the EYFS goes to the Forest School every Tuesday, where the children have opportunities to explore and investigate the natural world and a range of sights, smells, sounds and textures and they can build dens and shelters. In the EYFS classrooms, we also provide quiet relaxing spaces for children to have space and time to watch, talk, reflect, draw, and enjoy stories. The nursery has a special 'Dream Room' where the children are encouraged to play quietly, and the younger children use this space for nap times. In Reception the children have a range of areas such as, the reading tent in the classroom and the reading garden in the Play and Explore room.

Importance of Play

Play and exploration is fundamental to young children's learning and development. Children learn best when they are actively involved in enjoyable, absorbing and stimulating activities.

Play:

- Is the natural and enjoyable way for young children to learn.
- Is an essential and rich part of the learning process.
- Allows children to develop, consolidate and apply new skills and ideas, investigate, experiment and solve problems, explore and make sense of the world around them, learn about making choices and decisions and to take risks without fear of failure.
- Puts children in charge of their own learning.
- Takes place both indoors and outdoors.

At St James we believe that play and exploration should be well planned and purposeful in order to extend and support the children's learning. It should take place in a well – structured environment with meaningful context. We commit a great deal of time to careful planning to ensure that this takes place.

Areas of Provision We believe that high quality adult provision and intervention in children's early experiences and play will lead to effective learning and development of young children. Within the EYFS, they are offered a balance of adult directed support and independent activities which allow them to move from needing support to being able to do something on their own.

The EYFS curriculum is provided through careful planning and resourcing of indoor and outdoor areas. They are of equal importance, and it is essential to view them as one learning environment. Within the learning environment a range of specific areas are available.

Areas of provision include:

- **Practical Life Area** – developing motor control and coordination, as well as developing independence, concentration and a sense of responsibility. This covers care of self and care of the environment. (Nursery)
- **Sensorial Area** – activities that develop the five senses and focus on themes such as size, shape, composition, texture, sound, matching and weight. (Reception and Nursery)
- **Mathematics** (early mathematics) – number (quantity and symbol), counting, early addition and grouping and geometric and shape. (Reception and Nursery)
- **Language and Communication Language Area** – prewriting (Insets for Design) (pattern and tracing activities) letters (lower and uppercase), movable alphabet and objects, puppets. (Reception and Nursery)
- Book Corner (Reception and Nursery)
- **Understanding of the World** – Children's Birthday Walk, Nesting Boxes, globes, maps, Continents Puzzles, Small World People/Animals, Parts of an Animal/leaf puzzles, magnifying glasses, life cycles, Culture and Continent bags/boxes, themed teaching/learning about countries and cultures i.e. Africa. (Nursery)
- Small and large construction (Reception and Nursery)
- Sandpit, Mud Kitchen and water (Nursery and Reception Outdoor)
- Physical activity Opportunities to climb and build (Nursery and Reception Outdoor)
- Music and sound making (Nursery and Reception Outdoor)
- Information and communication technology (Reception and Nursery)
- Carpet areas for children to come together as a group. (Reception and Nursery)

Observations and Assessment

We recognise assessment plays an essential role in helping parents/carers and school staff to recognise pupils' progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and offer appropriate, targeted support.

Prior to entry

Children are not required to sit an assessment to gain entry to the Nursery however, all children are assessed prior to entry into Reception. These sessions aim to ensure that the school is one where the entrant will flourish socially, emotionally and academically.

We invite prospective pupils into the reception space to be observed. We also ask for a report from a child's nursery where this is available. In some cases, we visit a child to observe in a Nursery/Reception setting. This might involve a member of our Academic Mentoring department (SEN).

Approach

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of our learning and development process. Staff observe the pupils to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to shape learning experiences for them by reflecting on their observations. We ensure assessment opportunities do not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with pupils, nor require excessive paperwork.

We make regular assessments of children's learning. This information is used to ensure that future planning reflects the needs and interests of the children. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observations, baselines and informal assessments recorded by the Class Teachers, Assistant Teacher as well as other teaching staff as appropriate.

Individual and Class Trackers

Towards the completion of every Half Term, EYFS teachers complete each child's 'Development Matters' tracking documents which outlines the children's progress according to the Seven Key Learning Areas. Teachers highlight which statements apply using the school's highlighting colours for the appropriate age band which the child is achieving at/within. Teachers use this information to make a judgement about the developmental age band that each child is working within, based on the EYFS framework of the 17 aspects contained by the 7 areas of learning and development.

Once these key documents are completed, the Class Tracker for the whole class is also completed and updated.

The learning outcomes are outcomes for children that are set by the government, as they reach the end of the EYFS. However, they are not the limit of the experiences that the children will be offered. The curriculum is accessed through a combination of independent learning, adult directed tasks and child-initiated exploration.

Observations

Observations (formative assessment) are recorded on the Evidence Me app on the class iPad. All parents/carers have the opportunity to view the learning journey when we send home the children's profile at the end of each term.

Baselines and CEM

Pupils are assessed (summative assessment) using the CEM as a baseline at the beginning of the year and then at the end of each term in all 7 strands of learning. The progress of the pupils is continually monitored, with weekly meetings scheduled to discuss judgements, set targets and implement booster and support groups where appropriate. In the Autumn Term, we administer on a one-to-one basis, the CEM

assessment (summative) for all Reception pupils, giving standardised baseline data in literacy and mathematics. In May, the Reception pupils complete the CEM 'on exit' BASE assessment, again giving standardised data and allowing for an analysis of progress across the year to be made. Data is triangulated with formative assessments.

Informal Assessments

Teachers are continually assessing the children by informal assessments. These could be small group phonic challenges, maths number games and even 1:1 work with the children.

Reports

Formal reports for all pupils in the EYFS are provided at the end of the Autumn and Summer Term. The report comments on the three Prime Areas of Learning, literacy, and a general summary of the 3 other Specific Areas, as well as a social commentary, incorporating the Characteristics of Effective Learning. In the summer term report, comments cover all Prime and Specific Areas, including strengths and next steps and additionally give a social summary. An overview which indicates attainment against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals, and a summary on their Characteristics of Effective Learning, will also be published to parents. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teachers in preparation for transition into the next year group.

Parent evenings are held in the Autumn and Spring Term and give the opportunity to discuss their child's social, emotional and academic gains and areas for ongoing target.

Transitions

Towards the end of the school year the teacher will meet with the teacher for the following year, where they will discuss each child's skills and abilities. The discussion is focused around the characteristics of effective learning: playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically. The team also ensure the next teacher reads the end of year reports. A digital copy of the profile is also given at the end of the school year.

Marking

Reception use a tick if correct and a spot if incorrect. Stickers and a few words of feedback are given at the time. V is used if verbal feedback has been given. In Nursery, we use a traffic light system of green or red which the children are encouraged to use after a carpet time session. They put their name on green if they enjoyed the lesson and red if they didn't. This helps the teachers to understand what has been learnt and if it was enjoyed.

Partnership

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the

pupils and their families. Parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make and encourage them to play an active part in their child's education both at home and at School. Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice, in order to meet the needs of our pupils. At times, we may need to share information with other professionals, providing the best support possible.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Children's safeguarding and welfare is paramount. We have a secure environment and stringent policies, procedures, and documents in place. We teach pupils how to be safe, make choices and assess risks.

We comply with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) and meet the associated regulatory requirements for Safeguarding and Welfare to:

- Promote the welfare of children
- Promote good health, including oral health
- Prevent 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 we maintain the correct pupil to adult ratios and that all staff are suitably qualified
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe, efficient management of the School and to meet the needs of the children
- Protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children.

See St James Prep's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

Child Protection

St James is alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. It has appointed a senior member of staff with the necessary status and authority to be responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare (see below). Hannah Slater is the 'designated person' for the EYFS. Parents are welcome to approach the Designated Person if they have any concerns about the welfare of any child in the school, whether these concerns relate to their own child or any other. If preferred, parents may discuss concerns in private with the child's form teacher or the Headmistress, who will notify the Designated Person in accordance with these procedures.

- The Safeguarding Policy outlines procedures in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.
- The Prep School DSL is Nicola Scott-Phillips, the Designated Safeguarding Lead. She liaises with local agencies and the Tri-Borough Team. Mrs. Scott-Phillips, has received

regular child protection training with the Tri-Borough Team and trains, supports and advises the staff. If she is unavailable, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will carry out her duties.

- All staff are made aware of their responsibilities and the procedure for reporting concerns. They are required to read and sign the up to date Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 document.
- Training for all staff is annual and includes knowledge of the signs of possible abuse, child on child abuse, honour-based violence, potential radicalization and FGM.
- Our Safeguarding Policy is based on Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance September 2022. This Safeguarding guidance is supported also by our policies on Anti-bullying, Behaviour & Sanctions, Staff Code of Conduct, Concerns & Complaints, E Safety, Acceptable Use Policy, Security Policy and Children Missing from Education Policy.

Mobile Phones

It is prohibited to use personal phones, iPad or cameras in the EYFS space or for storing images of the children in our care. Please refer to the Code of Conduct Policy and/or the Mobile Phone Policy for the full guidance regarding staff use of phones and/or devices for personal use.

If a member of the team wears a smart watch to work, they must let the Head of EYFS know and they must disable the camera.

The team uses the school iPads which are locked in the office overnight. The Governor with special responsibility for the EYFS is Angela Bowman.

Staff taking Medication/Substances

No EYFS teacher must be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If staff are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, they must seek medical advice. St James ensures that those practitioners only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly. Staff medication is securely stored and out of reach of children at all times.

Children's Medicines

Children who need to take medication at school, will need to have an parent/carer fill out a form from the school Nurse (see Medical Policy). The school Nurse then informs the teachers when the child needs to take the medication. In the Nursery, staff are allowed to administer medication on the advice of matron. Staff must fill in and complete the medical administration form every time this is done.

Premises

Indoor space requirement meets the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) requirements, of

- Two-year-olds: 2.5 m² per child
- Children aged three to five years: 2.3 m² per child

The EYFS share the Nursery outdoor space which is checked by the team daily and meets the safety requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework.

Safety

The Reception class area is checked daily by the Estates Team and through a thorough check list every morning.

The Nursery premises is also checked by a member of the Estates Team and through a thorough checklist. As the Nursery is its own building, please see the Nursery Security Policy.

Child Dismissal

The Nursery and Reception have different dismissal routines. Please see the EYFS dismissal policy for more details.

Risk Assessments

We ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure staff and pupils are not exposed to risks. Rigorous daily checks and enhanced cleaning procedures are in place. All written risk assessments, informing staff practice and management of risk are available on request.

Staff supervision

EYFS staff receive termly supervision which provides support, coaching and training and promotes the interests of pupils. Supervision fosters a culture of mutual support, teamwork, and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues. It also provides further opportunities for staff to discuss any issues particularly concerning pupil development or well-being.

Ratios

We ensure that pupils are adequately supervised and that children are always within sight and hearing of staff. We meet the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) with the following adult to child ratios:

- Level 6 - 1:30
- Instructor - 1:30
- Level 3-5 - 1:13
- Level – 2 - 1:8, in the presence of a Level 3 or above
- 2 Year olds – 1:5
- 3 Year olds – 1:13

Managing Behaviour

Please refer to whole school Behaviour & Sanctions Policy.

- We do not use corporal punishment. A written record is taken where physical restraint is used in order to avert danger or personal injury and parents will be informed in writing if an incident occurs. The EYFS teachers have a Physical Restraint log and folder to record any incidents.
- Staff concerned with any incident will inform parents of the actions taken as soon as possible. Please refer to whole school Behaviour & Sanctions Policy and the Anti-Bullying Policy. The EYFS teachers have a Behaviour and Bullying log and folder to record any incidents.
- We use praise, encouragement and good example to foster a culture of co-operation and encourage the children to be their best. The EYFS uses the 'Weather System' to help encourage positive behaviour along with the use of house points.

Complaints

St James has a written procedure for complaints from parents. Please refer to the whole school Complaints Policy for the details of our procedure.

- The parents are supplied with the information of how to contact ISI in our Complaints Policy.
- Access to all policies is on the website.
- Parents are informed of an imminent inspection and are supplied with a copy of the report afterwards.
- A display of how to complain is displayed in the entrance to the Nursery.
- The EYFS teachers have a complaints log and folder. This is a record of the complaint, date, how it has been dealt with and when the complaint was closed.
- There were no Level 3 complaints in the last academic year

Paediatric First Aid

All EYFS staff hold a recognised Paediatric First Aid certificate, as noted in Annex A of Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021). The School ensures

at least one person with the aforementioned certificate is on the premises and is available at all times. Paediatric First Aid training is renewed every three years.

Oral Health

Healthy eating habits and good oral health are continually promoted. Once a year the EYFS have a visit from a nutritionist and a visit from a local dental practitioner.

Monitoring and Review

- The Head of EYFS works with the Head of Lower School. Together they carry out the monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole School monitoring.
- EYFS is part of the St James Prep Development Plan and has its own section.
- Whole School policies equally apply to the EYFS, as they incorporate the mandatory requirements.

Homework

Nursery – There is no homework set in the Nursery. However, in the weekly newsletter we set out a weekend challenge for them to do with their parents.

Reception – Reception are asked to do 10 minutes a day of reading and a weekend diary is sent home every Friday where the children document what they have done at home.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies which provide specific information on other areas of the school and EYFS:

- All school policies relating to Safeguarding
- The Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid and Administration of Medicines Policy
- Supervision Policy
- EYFS Dismissal Policy
- Missing Child Policy
- Nursery Security Policy