



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

St Barnabas CofE Primary School

Approved by: LGB

Last reviewed on: September 2025

Next review due by: September 2026

This policy supersedes all previous Early Years policies



1. Purpose

This policy has been written to outline the philosophy, aims and principles of early years teaching and learning across all Fioretti Trust Early Years settings. The document is to be used as a guide and framework to support the individual school settings.

2. Aims

The Early Years provide the foundation for all future learning. We have the following aims:

1. To ensure that children access a broad and ambitious curriculum that gives them the knowledge and skills they need, providing a strong foundation for excellent future progress through their time at school and in life;
2. To ensure quality and consistency in curriculum and teaching standards so that every child achieves their potential;
3. To support close partnership working between teachers, Early Years specialists and parents and/or carers;
4. To ensure inclusive and anti-discriminatory approaches and practice so that every child is able to flourish and is supported.

Principles for Early Years:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time
- Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Children develop and learn at different rates

The curriculum offered in each Fioretti Trust primary takes full account of the requirement of the statutory framework <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2> , which combines the development of personal, social and emotional skills, physical development and opportunities for enriching communication and language. This is done through a mixture of adult-led and child-initiated learning, and a broad and exciting curriculum with daily phonics, mathematics and literacy sessions or activities.

It is the adult's role to teach, support, stimulate and extend children's learning through initiating and extending experiences and interacting skilfully and sensitively with children to scaffold, support and enhance learning.

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We put a great emphasis on the Characteristics of Effective Learners. We believe that children will develop independence, resilience and perseverance through playing and exploring, being active learners, creating and thinking critically. Therefore, we enable children to solve problems and develop their own strategies for doing things.

Learning behaviours are taught intentionally and modelled so that they will stand each child in good stead for their future. These behaviours must focus on the ability to listen actively, take turns, learn appropriate behaviour for all contexts, take risks, understand failure, be resilient, adopt a growth mindset, follow direct instructions, show respect to self, others and the environment.

In a FIORETTI TRUST early years setting these learning behaviours will be achieved through:

- A. High expectations for learning;
- B. Clear routines and procedures that help build independence, confidence and build self-assurance for children;
- C. Purposeful and challenging experiences;
- D. An enabling environment which promotes language development;
- E. Inspiring teaching that will enable the children to be curious, creative and thirsty for knowledge, promoting a love of learning;
- F. The formation of a strong partnership with parents/carers;
- G. An individualised approach to the pastoral care and needs of every child.

We provide a stimulating environment, indoors and out, providing many opportunities for children to be curious, ask questions and to be eager to discover and learn.

3. Organisation

3.1. FIORETTI TRUST Early Years settings follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. Children learn through:

Playing and exploring.

Learning actively.

Creating and thinking critically.

3.2. We are influenced by the Ofsted document 'Bold Beginnings' (2017). We balance whole class teaching and small group teaching with learning through play (continuous provision).

3.3. Reception:

- We teach **mathematics** Monday to Thursday using Tens Town, to consolidate number formation and identification teaching from Nursery, Mastering Number and White Rose Maths direct teaching and activities three days a week.

Continuous provision activities are available all days, including in outdoor areas.

- We teach **phonics** 40-50 minutes daily using the Essential Letters and Sounds scheme (ELS). All children read their decodable reading books with an adult weekly and a wide range of stories are shared daily. Reading areas are available outside.
- We teach **writing** directly with opportunities daily to write in phonics and Literacy lessons that follow a Talk4Writing approach. 3x a week children begin the day with fine motor skills / handwriting. Writing opportunities / mark making areas / funky fingers (fine motor skills) / malleable activities are available at all times, including in outdoor areas.
- Religious Education in Reception follows the Emmanuel project, focusing upon Christianity and makes links between its shared themes/teachings and a range of religions. Collective Worship singing and discussion sessions are hosted three times per week with regular opportunities for prayer and reflection throughout the day.
- WELLCOMM is taught daily for 10 minutes with support from S&L SEND TA, split into smaller groups, determined by WELLCOMM assessments. NELI interventions are used to support pupils identified for early speech, language and communication intervention.

Nursery:

- Main focus is on Communication and Language, Physical Development and PSED. Much of this is delivered through modelling and practical application as well as continuous provision activities.
- Every day starts with a carpet session, comprising of book operation skills, songs linked to Understanding the World and mark making linked to name recognition and writing.
- Phonics linked to Phase One of Letters and Sounds, takes place four times a week for approximately 10 minutes. Rhymes are used daily to support learning of letters, letter sounds, rhyme and phonological awareness.
- Story time is daily with continuous access to the book area and book boxes around the classroom.
- Direct Maths teaching takes place during carpet time twice a week and continuous provision activities/resources are always available. Tens Town is used daily to support learning.
- Writing opportunities are available through continuous provision every day, including fine motor and malleable activities with a focus on name recognition and name writing.
- Religious Education is taught through exploration of celebration-based themes that recognise a range of religions. Collective Worship singing and discussion sessions are hosted three times per week with regular opportunities for prayer and reflection throughout the day.

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- 1.4. We combine direct teaching, including explicit modelling, with varied and wide opportunities for application and practise so our children can consolidate their knowledge.
- 1.5. Teachers make professional judgments about the balance between activities led or guided by adults and those led by children.
- 1.6. **Adult directed activities** are those which are directed by the adult and can be useful in the teaching of specific knowledge or skills such as introducing a new topic, new skill or demonstrating how to use tools or equipment. In Reception classes, daily teaching of literacy and maths is from the outset and is a key part of our curriculum.
- 1.7. **Continuous provision (child-initiated experiences)** take place within an enabling and well-thought-through environment. Child-initiated activities are deeply encouraged, and will often be decided upon primarily by the child. However, there will also often be occasions where adults will encourage children to choose certain activities relating to their learning needs. Children have daily opportunities planned where they can explore their environment, both indoors and outdoors, providing them with time to seek out and use the resources in an imaginative way, collaboration with their peers and following their interests.
- 1.8. The role of the practitioner within child-initiated play is crucial: to scaffold and foster children's ability to interact with their environment and its resources appropriately and effectively; to play alongside children within the environment, helping to model language skills and ideas; to extend the children's learning further and to prompt their creative thinking. This in turn will also help to strengthen relationships formed with children.
- 1.9. Continuous Provision supports our practitioners to observe and assess, which in turn, enables the regular assessments of children's life experiences, language, talking and thinking skills to be used to evaluate and enhance continuous provision and plan learning opportunities to support further learning and progress.

4. Curriculum - what children learn

4.1. Curriculum content is planned in seven areas of learning and development.

4.2. Three Prime Areas:

- 4.2.1. **Communication and Language** – The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children develop skills and confidence in speaking, understanding and listening in a range of situations

4.2.2. Physical Development – Physical activity is vital in children’s all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood. Children develop their coordination, control, and movement through being active

4.2.3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development – PSED is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Within clear boundaries children form positive relationships, develop social skills and respect for others and understand appropriate behaviours

4.3. Four Specific Areas:

4.3.1. Literacy – through the daily phonics lesson children link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. In addition, there are regular opportunities for storytelling. Fine motor skills development and handwriting are also continually taught and practised.

4.3.2. Mathematics – through the daily maths lesson, this includes short chunks of whole class teaching and focused maths experiences, and conversations about numbers, maths in the everyday world, shape awareness and oral rehearsal of number sequences and patterns.

4.3.3. Understanding the World – finding out about people, places, our own locality, cultures and the environment. We also love to develop an awareness and understanding of various beliefs and traditions throughout the school year, celebrating ourselves, our families and our community.

4.3.4. Expressive Arts and Design – exploring a wide range of media and sharing thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

5. Admissions

- 5.1. All children must be offered full-time learning in the Early Years setting from the first day of the September term. Staggered entries may be operated for a limited period to meet the needs of the children in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.2. Nursery visits are an essential part of the transition period so that staff can fully understand the relationship between the child and the parent/carer and build on this aspect of the child’s learning, as well as any pre-school experiences that the child has received. Relevant staff attend local meetings with nurseries to support smooth transition. Staff, including the pastoral manager, conduct home visits for all children coming into nursery.

6. Inclusion (Including SEND)

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- 6.1. Teachers will ensure that any early years pupils with special educational needs are given effective support, to ensure they can access the curriculum effectively and make progress. The school SENDCo will provide support and advice as needed on meeting pupils' needs.
- 6.2. Children will be taught to respect the cultural differences and abilities of all the children and their families and to recognise feelings involving other people. When appropriate, advice and guidance will be sought from outside agencies and professionals to support individual children. No child will be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability. The staff will scaffold the work to meet the experiences, abilities and aptitudes of the children, offering support and extension work as required.
- 6.3. All children will be given equal access to and are encouraged to participate in all curriculum activities.

7. Baseline on entry, Reception Baseline Assessment & on-going assessment

- 7.1. The Reception Baseline Assessment will be completed during the first 6 weeks in which a child starts Reception. It will assess a child's early mathematics, literacy, communication & language. The data generated will primarily be used as a progress measure when a child completes KS2. Staff will also complete the first round of school internal assessments by Autumn half term, providing a more detailed assessment of the pupils in all 17 areas. A baseline WELLCOMM assessment will also be completed by the end of the first half-term as well as LanguageScreen to assess pupils for NELI.
- 7.2. The school baseline will be completed within the first half term of a child entering school. The judgment will be made using observations and the judgements for each child will be uploaded into the Early Years Progress Tracker on INSIGHT. These judgments will be moderated in trust-wide meetings through robust rich discussions with the EY lead and reception staff.
- 7.3. Through observations of learning, summative assessments and regular moderation of children's work, practitioners will make further judgements within their setting across the year to enable identified gaps in learning to be addressed. At St Barnabas, we use CLASS DOJO to capture achievements and share with parents/carers but, in line with the principles of the Early Years Framework, will not seek to generate a raft of physical evidence to support a judgement. Assessments will take place on all 17 areas at the end of each term.

- 7.4. Settings will make every effort to ensure parents and carers are able to share and contribute to the developing whole assessment picture of a child to arrive at judgements.

8. School Readiness

- 8.1. Defining what school readiness means is an essential factor in ensuring that children can be well prepared for starting school which is defined as year one.
- 8.2. The details below are set out as a guide and not an exhaustive list, as to what children should be able to do in order to be ready to begin Year one.

ALL NEW TO ALIGN WITH EYFS TRACKER USED ACROSS TRUST

Reception - Autumn outcomes	Reception - Spring outcomes	Reception - Summer outcomes
Communication and language		
<p>Listen to instructions and respond.</p> <p>Develop their vocabulary from experiences.</p> <p>Able to talk about what we are doing now and what might happen later.</p> <p>Listen to and join in with repeated phrases in familiar stories and join in with rhymes.</p> <p>Recognise some features of non-fiction and fiction books.</p> <p>To extend spoken language to full sentences.</p>	<p>Understand how to listen carefully and why listening is important.</p> <p>Learn new vocabulary.</p> <p>Use new vocabulary through the day.</p> <p>Ask questions to find out more and to check they understand what has been said to them.</p> <p>Use new vocabulary in different contexts.</p> <p>Listen carefully to rhymes and songs, paying attention to how they sound.</p>	<p>Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions</p> <p>Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.</p> <p>Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers</p> <p>Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher</p>

<p>Listen and respond to peers within small groups.</p>	<p>Engage in non-fiction books.</p> <p>Articulate themselves in well-formed sentences.</p> <p>Be able to share ideas with a partner or within a small group of peers and feedback on the contributions of others</p>	<p>Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary</p>
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Literacy		
<p>Demonstrate the appropriate way to engage with books. Join in with familiar phrases in stories they re-read.</p> <p>Be able to identify unfamiliar vocabulary.</p> <p>Identify most Phase 2 sounds and develop their confidence to use strategies to blend sounds.</p> <p>Trace and form patterns using appropriate pencil grip. Begin to form letters in line with Phonics teaching.</p> <p>Use initial sounds and, with support, use segmenting strategies to listen out for and records sounds in CVC words.</p>	<p>Re-read books to build up their confidence in word reading, their fluency and their understanding and enjoyment.</p> <p>Define new vocabulary and identify where to find these in familiar texts.</p> <p>Building confidence identifying and reading words containing Phase 2 and 3 sounds.</p> <p>Form recognisable letters for those graphemes taught within Phase 2.</p> <p>Use segmenting strategies to identify sounds within CVC words and some more complex words.</p>	<p>Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary. Anticipate key events in stories</p> <p>Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.</p> <p>Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs</p> <p>Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending</p> <p>Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent</p>

	<p>Link words to write short phrases and sentences with the appropriate scaffolds.</p>	<p>with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words</p> <p>Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed</p> <p>Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters</p> <p>Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others</p>
Mathematics		
<p>Count objects, actions and sounds.</p> <p>Subitise to 3</p> <p>Use rhymes and graphics to support identification of numbers to 10</p> <p>Identify more and less in groups of objects</p> <p>Count with 1:1 correspondence within 5</p>	<p>Subitise to 5.</p> <p>Link the number symbol (numeral) with its cardinal number value up to 10</p> <p>Understand the ‘one more than/one less than’ relationship between consecutive numbers</p> <p>Explore the composition of numbers to 10</p>	<p>Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number</p> <p>Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5</p> <p>Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts</p>

Identify parts within a whole number through exploration of representations	Automatically recall number bonds for numbers 0–5 and some to 10.	
Count to 10 aloud with accuracy and begin to bridge 10 to teen numbers	Count beyond ten Compare numbers.	Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system
Identify 2D shapes and their properties	Select, rotate and manipulate shapes in order to develop spatial reasoning skills.	Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity
Copy patterns and discuss the shapes used	Continue, copy and create repeating patterns. Compare length, weight and capacity	Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally
Use opposites to identify difference in length, height and weight (eg. heavy/light)		Compose and decompose shapes so that children recognise a shape can have other shapes within it, just as numbers can.
Physical development		
Move with appropriate speed for their environment, begin to show awareness of obstacles	Demonstrate awareness of space and move safely around obstacles	Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others
Climb and negotiate play equipment at varying heights, develop competence moving with rhythms	Confidently manoeuvre 'risky play' apparatus	Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing

<p>Able to use and sustain a tripod grip, with prompts</p> <p>Use appropriate grip to control scissors and tools of varying size. Begin to paint using large brushes with more precision</p>	<p>Use a tripod grip to write most of the time</p> <p>Cut with accuracy along straight lines and with developing competency around bends. Use smaller paint brushes to apply colour more accurately</p>	<p>Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing</p> <p>Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases</p> <p>Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery</p> <p>Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Personal social and emotional development</p>		
<p>Identify and name emotions and begin to choose activities that support regulation of emotions when required</p> <p>Able to dress with developing speed and confidence</p> <p>Able to ask an adult or friend for help or if they need something.</p> <p>Speak about their likes, dislikes and skills</p> <p>Able to usually adapt behaviour to different situations.</p>	<p>Identify and moderate their own feelings socially and emotionally.</p> <p>Manage their own needs: - personal hygiene</p> <p>Know and talk about the different factors that support their overall health and wellbeing: - regular physical activity - healthy eating - toothbrushing - sensible amounts of ‘screen time’ - having a good sleep routine - being a safe pedestrian</p> <p>See themselves as a valuable individual.</p>	<p>Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly</p> <p>Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate</p> <p>Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.</p> <p>Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and</p>

<p>'Have a go' at new activities where they may lack confidence</p> <p>Identify what makes a good friend and actions that we appreciate in others</p> <p>Identify similarities and differences between themselves and others</p>	<p>Show resilience and perseverance</p> <p>Build constructive and respectful relationships.</p> <p>Express their feelings and consider the feelings of others.</p> <p>Think about the perspectives of others</p>	<p>perseverance in the face of challenge</p> <p>Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly</p> <p>Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices</p> <p>Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others</p> <p>Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers</p> <p>Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs</p>
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9. Environments

- 9.1. Children have daily access to well-planned stimulating learning environments, indoors and outdoors. These environments give children opportunities to be active and physical and also quiet and reflective.
- 9.2. The Early Years environment - inside and outside - is viewed as a whole, providing different areas where resources, materials and activities are freely and easily accessible.
- 9.3. The areas of learning in the environment may include:
 - 9.3.1. Role play area
 - 9.3.2. Reading area.
 - 9.3.3. Graphics or mark-making area.
 - 9.3.4. Mathematics area.
 - 9.3.5. Construction area.

- 9.3.6. Small world area.
- 9.3.7. Music area.
- 9.3.8. Creative area.
- 9.3.9. Malleable area.
- 9.3.10. ICT area.
- 9.3.11. Sand/water areas.
- 9.3.12. Loose parts area
- 9.3.13. Technology area.

10. Outdoor Education in the Early Years

- 10.1. Opportunities to learn outdoors are essential for the development of all children. The outdoor learning space offers experiences and provocations that cannot be replicated anywhere else. All strands of learning can be developed through both planned and child-initiated play. School offers children a sustained time outdoors to play and develop their learning. To ensure that this learning takes place all year round, children have access to appropriate clothing such as wellington boots and waterproofs for inclement weather, if required.
- 10.2. Outdoor learning contributes to and promotes a positive response to personal health, safety and well-being. It helps children gain an awareness of the need for sustainable relationships between people and the environment and encourages the growth of self-esteem, cooperation with others and personal responsibility.
- 10.3. In a FIORETTI TRUST Early Years setting the outdoor area must:
 - A. Give children the freedom to explore, use their senses and be physically active. Provide opportunities for large mark making and writing; include writing resources such as chalks, paint brushes with water, pencils and clipboards. Reading opportunities in the forms of signs, labels and simple stories and sequences.
 - B. Provide opportunities for mathematical development such as opportunities for counting natural objects, comparing length and weight with real life objects such as sticks and stones. Be able to solve problems using mathematical knowledge and understanding.
 - C. Include a quiet area for activities such as reading and observation.
 - D. Provide opportunities for large scale construction and gross-motor development through sports equipment and other open-ended resources.
 - E. Include an area for sensory mud/water play ideally a 'mud kitchen'

11. Training and Professional Development

- 11.1. The early years staff are supported and encouraged to continue their own development. The Trust aims for all early years' teachers and support staff, as a result of training and experience, will be able to observe and respond

appropriately to the children, building upon their knowledge and understanding of how children develop and learn.

- 11.2. The Trust Early Years Lead will continue to provide opportunities for Early Years practitioners across the trust to engage in professional development and dialogue. Opportunities will be a blended offer of virtual network meetings and face to face opportunities.
- 11.3. There will be regular Early Years meetings between reception and nursery staff and senior leadership to facilitate ongoing development of staff.



“Through Jesus we encourage one another and build each other up, to be our best selves”