

# St Alban's C of E Academy



EYFS Curriculum Policy  
2021-2022

## Contents

<b>Intent:</b> .....	3
Curriculum Design: .....	4
<b>Implementation:</b> .....	5
Our EYFS charter: .....	5
Unique Child: .....	5
Positive Relationships: .....	6
Enabling Environments: .....	7
Learning and Development: .....	9
Educational Programmes: .....	9
Characteristics of Effective Learning: .....	11
Planning: .....	11
Teaching strategies: .....	11
The importance of play: .....	12
Teaching: .....	12
The Role of the Adults in the Early Years Setting: .....	12
Intimate Care: .....	13
Assessment: .....	14
Parents and the Wider Community: .....	15
Special Educational Needs: .....	16
English as an additional language: .....	17
Continuity & Progression: .....	17
Safeguarding/Welfare of Pupils: .....	18
<b>Impact:</b> .....	18
Links to other Policies .....	19
List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS.....	20



# EYFS Curriculum Policy

## Mission Statement.

At St Alban's Academy we are guided by the life and teachings of Jesus encouraging us to learn and work together to fulfil our God given potential.

Our school nurtures curiosity and creativity through an inspiring, broad and engaging curriculum, where learning is paramount. The children of St Albans Academy learn to become resilient and self-assured in an environment where they are safe and encouraged to excel in all they do. We embrace challenge and encourage achievement as individuals, by preparing children for their role as citizens in modern Britain.

We aim to be an outstanding, inspirational school in the heart of a culturally diverse community, striving for excellence, enabling children to achieve their highest potential in all facets of school life.

Our school's reflective approach, adopted by teachers and children, enables the development of growth mind-set where anything is achievable. We value the views of our children by instating annually a School Council that drives standards and key issues and a Worship Council that drives the Christian ethos, values and collective worship. Children also benefit from aspirational extra-curricular learning opportunities accredited by the Children's University, a methodology that prepares children with an early understanding of higher education.

### Intent:

At St Alban's C of E Academy we recognise that every child is an **exceptional** individual. We believe that all children deserve an education that is rich in wonder and memorable experiences that allows their natural creativity and curiosity to flourish. We put children at the heart of all we do. We provide a secure foundation for future learning and development within a safe, stimulating and **respectful** environment that inspires exploration and encourages **collaboration**.

We ensure that our children experience an ambitious and inclusive curriculum that educates in knowledge, skills and understanding. It is designed to be creative, inspiring and challenging, to provide all children with opportunities to be aspirational learners.

We are passionate about creating opportunities for children to communicate more easily through developing language and communication skills and specifically teaching vocabulary. We create opportunities for children to communicate more easily through developing language and communication skills and specifically teaching vocabulary. Language theory research informs us that young children's language development is influenced by many factors, including having sensitive adults and older children around them who will listen and attend to their expressions and use and model appropriate language themselves. The research of Hart and Risley (1995) identifies a 30 million word gap, the findings from the Oxford Language Report recognises that the word gap has a significant impact on a child's academic potential. We understand that language development is part of their holistic development, emerging from cognitive, emotional and social interactions. Therefore, the social and cultural environment, the people in it and their interactions are absolutely fundamental to language development. We wish our children to believe in themselves, their abilities and capabilities, to belong to the school learning community and the wider community.

We wish our children to believe in themselves, their abilities and capabilities, to belong to the school learning community and the wider community. Therefore, our curriculum aims to embed opportunities to develop cultural capital through well-chosen texts, visits, and experiences. In addition, there are many opportunities for children to apply their learning in real life contexts and make links with the community around them as well as the wider world.



## Curriculum Design:

Our Early Years curriculum is one that has been designed, tailored and enhanced specifically for the Nursery and Reception children at St Alban's C of E Academy based on educational theory and research. It aims to embed opportunities to develop social and cultural capital so that they develop a love of learning and confidence in their place in the world. Through well-chosen texts, visits, and experiences, children are provided with exciting opportunities to apply their learning in real life contexts and make links with the community around them as well as the wider world.

There is a strong focus on the child as a whole person and support for the child's overall development based around the Social Constructivist and Social Learning Theories of Vygotsky and Bandura. Relationships and participation are central to learning. We understand that children develop and learn in many different ways that are socially and culturally approved and constructed.

The teachings of Maslow's Humanist Theory, Bowlby's Attachment Theory and Bronfenbrenner's Social Learning Theory clearly identify the importance of close, trusting relationships. Our practitioners develop a respectful, secure, caring relationship with each and every child. They understand the importance of five essential elements of emotional intelligence of Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory. We promote and support the development of self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation and managing relationships through dedicated small group discussions, social stories, nurture and clearly focused involvement in the children's learning. We provide our children with the skills to build social capital through their relationships and friendships that they make with people from all different backgrounds and their involvement in the local community.

Each strand of our pedagogical approach is designed to strengthen children's social and cultural capital through language, social opportunities and cultural experiences. Our children learn ways of being interdependent through their participation in everyday events and as members of different social groups. We use the work of Steiner to ensure children's learning experiences are provided

through regular daily tasks and the environment is welcoming with a place where their things belong. We also build upon the Discovery Learning Theory of Bruner to ensure children are active agents and contributors in the social groups in which they participate. We ensure children revisit their ideas through a spiral curriculum where learning opportunities are promoted through exploration.

In Reception, children receive a carefully balanced diet of directed teaching in Phonics, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World and Expressive Arts which is complemented by daily extended continuous provision where they have the opportunity to put these skills into practice through independent application. To facilitate this, our highly skilled practitioners observe and identify “teachable moments” specific to that child through the modelling of language, modelling, demonstrating and explaining, exploring ideas and questioning, providing a narrative and setting challenges to measure understanding of each taught concept.

## Implementation:

In the Early Years children are developing more rapidly, intellectually and socially, than at any other subsequent stage in their lives. This growth is, however, very individual and children vary greatly in their maturity in the different areas of development and each child enters the setting with a unique range of experiences, abilities and understanding. The educational experiences planned at St Alban’s C of E Academy will take account of these individual achievements and needs. The aim of the Early Years Curriculum at St Alban’s C of E Academy is to nurture and build upon children’s natural energy, enthusiasm, curiosity and sense of humour. Young children learn predominately through playing individually or co-operatively in small groups and, therefore, structured, planned play is the medium through which the Early Years Curriculum at St Alban’s C of E Academy will predominantly be delivered.

## Our EYFS charter:

Our children are entitled to

- Learn through exploration that builds upon children’s natural energy, enthusiasm and curiosity.
- Develop positive relationships that are warm, loving and foster a sense of belonging.
- A learning environment that offers rich learning opportunities that motivate, inspire and encourage independence and risk taking.
- Be respected for their individual characteristics, temperament and learning styles.
- Believe they can achieve and fulfil their true potential.
- Access an innovative curriculum where learning is essentially first-hand, explorative and active.

## Unique Child:

At St Alban’s C of E Academy we support each **Unique Child** by recognising and respecting children’s individual characteristics and temperament. We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We know that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their school and home environments and we begin to build links with their families.

We get to know each child really well through sensitive observations of their freely chosen play; by listening to them and their parents/ carers and by interacting in their play. As a result we are able to tune into their interests, schemas, communication, and learning styles. By providing time, space and resources for child-led play, we enable children to explore, investigate, and demonstrate their knowledge, skills and attitudes. We ensure children feel valued, secure and confident to learn by acknowledging them as competent learners and building on what they can already do and understand.

We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem. During their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the children are introduced to the learning habits using our Learning Bees. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, co-operative and to use reasoning. Children begin to understand the concept of the growth mind-set. They are taught that they can 'grow their brains' so that they understand that everyone can learn with practice and effort. The children are taught how to learn and how to become successful learners.

Children's communication skills are supported through high quality adult/ child interactions where we provide good eye contact, follow the child's lead, tune into their focus of interest and have genuine conversations with children. We praise and affirm their communication, commenting on what they are doing or the focus of their attention and take opportunities to explain, repeat and expand vocabulary.

By working in partnership with parents and other agencies, and by providing an accessible and welcoming environment, we aim to include all children effectively. We use a visual timetable so that all children can feel secure in the knowledge of what will be happening throughout the day and can track the sequential progress of the day's events. We provide additional support for children's developing speech and language skills by using photographs, symbols and gestures.

We provide warm, responsive care and have an effective safeguarding policy and procedure. We respect and support children's dietary and medical needs, provide a range of healthy food and ensure fresh drinking water is always available. Children get fresh air and exercise through access to our secure outdoor area. We provide a safe, secure environment both indoors and outdoors where children can pursue enjoyable and challenging activities with a balance of physically active and restful activities. We explain and demonstrate clear, consistent boundaries and routines and help children to learn to assess risks and keep safe.

## Positive Relationships:

At St Alban's C of E Academy we provide **Positive Relationships** by working as a close co-operative staff team and in partnership with parents, to support every child in our care. We make time to form good relationships with children and their families, initially through individual meetings with parents and their children and then through sensitive induction into our setting. We communicate with practitioners from previous settings to help make transitions smooth and seamless for children and families. When children first start Nursery and Reception, children attend the "Stay and Play" sessions and parents are given an information booklet detailing expectations and systems and routines in Early Years. Nursery and Reception use Home/School reading journals, Home/School Homework Books and our personalized observational sharing online system 2Build-a-Profile which aids regular communication between home and school. Parents are helped to understand more about learning and teaching through workshops on important areas such as play, outdoor learning and early reading.

All staff are dedicated to getting to know the children really well, responding sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour and helping them become settled, secure and confident. We help children understand their own feelings and those of others, and support them in building friendships. Stories, Circle Time and Forest School are used to promote understanding and respect for different needs, views and cultures. By valuing their contributions, tuning into their interests and needs, encouraging and praising their achievements, we nurture children's self-esteem and give them a strong sense of belonging. Nursery children are helped with the Transition into Reception by making regular visits, across the final half term, accompanied by familiar staff into the Reception learning environment. Children also have continuous opportunities throughout their time in Nursery to interact with, learn alongside and become familiar and confident with Reception children and Staff.

We use friendly and lively approaches to stimulate and support children, encouraging them to try several ways to make something work rather than giving up. In order to support children's development and learning effectively, we make sensitive observations of children and then respond and interact appropriately. Because we know the children well we are able to judge when children are ready to be taught new concepts and skills.

By joining in the children's play, we show that we respect and value the children's ideas and creativity; through exploring materials and researching alongside the children we encourage and extend curiosity, language development and thinking skills. By modelling how to be a learner, we help children reflect on their own learning.

## Enabling Environments:

Our setting provides children with an **Enabling 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. Good communication with multi-agency professionals and links with other local settings helps us to support continuity of learning and consistency of care for children, enabling them to settle in quickly. 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: written notes, annotated photographs, samples of children's mark making; conversations with children about their learning; and dialogue with parents. Careful analysis of this information will be used to: document children's Learning Journeys; to identify and track their 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.

Whilst our planning is informed by our observations of children's interests and developmental needs, where possible we also try to involve children in planning their learning experiences. We then link the children's ideas to objectives in the seven areas of learning and development in the EYFS Framework and also ensure a balance of child-initiated activities and adult-led teaching. Not only is our teaching informed and enriched by the children's ideas and interests, but the children also use taught skills independently to support and extend their own free play. In this way, adult-initiated and child-initiated activities are often interdependent and mutually enhanced. Experiences are differentiated for those who need extra support or challenge. Planning is flexible to enable us to capitalise on children's current fascinations or unplanned events such as a fall of snow or squirrels in the outdoor classroom, which can enable powerful learning.

We provide an enriching environment inside, outside and in our Forest School and we move learning between the three 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, children have opportunities to explore and investigate the natural world in our Forest School and a range of sights, smells, sounds and textures; they can plant flowers and vegetables; build dens and shelters. In our outdoor classroom the children are encouraged to make large constructions with blocks; follow math's trails; use maps for treasure hunts; do large scale painting with decorators' brushes; create music and dance; co-operate in parachute games; engage in action rhymes and traditional playground games; and enjoy role play that requires extra space such as firefighting or postal delivery. We also provide quiet relaxing spaces for children to have space and time to watch, talk, reflect, draw, and enjoy stories.

We provide children with a range of multi-sensory experiences and open-ended resources to encourage exploration, investigation and creativity and to generally enrich their learning and development. We provide sensory trays where, early writing can be explored by mark-making in glitter, cornflour silk, shaving foam, soapy sand or finger paints. Exploring playdough and clay is not only a satisfying sensory and therapeutic experience, but it also helps develop children's manipulative skills. Water play and trays of material like sand, compost, lentils, give children opportunities to explore filling containers and investigate different sizes, shapes and capacity. Over the weeks we may add a range of other stimuli to the water tray, including: food colouring; ice cubes; small world sea creatures; sailing boats; bubbles; plastic tubing; and water wheels. In the sand or compost, children are able to dig for buried treasure, which might include objects of different texture, colours shape or size; or letters, words or numbers.

We have comfortable, attractive book corners where children can independently access and enjoy a range of picture books, stories, poems and non-fiction. These include books that: encourage interaction such as flap books and pop-up books; reflect cultural diversity and additional needs through positive images; support children who are experiencing a variety of life events e.g. new sibling, admission into hospital; and have photos of recent events in the setting with appropriate captions. There are soft toys for children to cuddle and read stories to for them to engage in retelling stories, and story headphones for children to listen to taped stories and rhymes.

We resource the environment to give children scope for developing their imagination and begin to create stories through: small world play (dolls house; farm set; vehicles and play mat; garage; play people; railway track; cars, dinosaurs etc.); by providing resources for extending sand play (shells; pebbles; twigs; play people; lego bricks; diggers; cars; trucks; dinosaurs; large black tray) so children can create gardens, parks, building sites, castles, treasure islands or other imaginative scenarios. Talking tins are used for children to record their stories as they tell them and musical instruments for them to add sound effects.

The children help us to plan and resource our role play areas and we ensure that it not only supports children's creative development but also provides rich and meaningful opportunities for other areas of learning. For example, if the children have decided they would like a Café this gives us opportunities for developing Communication Language and Literacy by providing a menu; an order pad; recipes; bills; receipts; posters; a "Specials" blackboard; signs such as "Open", "Closed" and "Pay here". There are also ideal opportunities for developing Problem Solving Reasoning and Numeracy through the number of items being ordered, the use of mathematical language such as "one more", "the biggest cake", "the round biscuit", and payment of the bill. In order to give children greater scope for creative play we also provide lengths of fabric for dressing up and other open-ended resources which the children can adapt and use imaginatively.

We have inviting Mark Making/Writing areas to encourage independent writing, with a range of attractive resources including: paper and card of different sizes, colours and shapes; pencils, crayons, felt tips; clipboards; postcards; envelopes; scissors; sticky tape; glue sticks; paper clips; hole punch; treasury tags/string; note books; message pads; old diaries and address books; blank coupons and forms to fill in. We provide a range of stimuli that is selected to reflect and extend the children's current interests such as: greetings cards; postcards; party invitations; letters and addressed envelopes; leaflets; flap books; zig zag books. Each child has a pocket with their name and photo on to encourage the children to draw and write messages for each other.

Our Creative Areas have materials for "placing and arranging", such as shells, leaves, pebbles, feathers, buttons and seeds. To support "designing and making", we provide empty boxes, cardboard tubes, lolly sticks, paper and card, scissors, masking tape, glue, hole punch etc. We also use a range of kits such as duplo, mobilo, magnetic blocks and lego to support construction play. In addition we display photos of buildings, bridges and vehicles to inspire children with their constructions, and provide clipboards and pencils for them to record their ideas.

Children have lots of opportunities to develop Problem Solving and Mathematical skills in both the indoor and outdoor environment. As much as possible we use real life situations to make Mathematics meaningful, for example: celebrating birthdays; preparing for snack time; writing shopping lists; cooking; planning for a party; scoring for games. The children also enjoy going on Maths trails to look for different shapes and numbers, counting the "giant strides" or "kangaroo jumps" they make as they search. Treasure hunts and obstacle courses support children with their positional language as they look *under*, *on top of*, *next to*, *behind*, and travel *through*, *round* and *over*.

We have some interesting collections of objects for children to sort, classify, order and count, such as: shells, pebbles, bears, cubes, counters. The children help us to make number lines; perhaps by collecting a number of objects and putting them in a little transparent bag to hang on a hook, above which is the number. We gather and use props to support the many number rhymes that the children enjoy, such as: Five Little Speckled Frogs; Five Little Ducks; Ten Green Bottles; Ten Little Monkeys jumping on the bed.

## Learning and Development:

St Alban's C of E Academy follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is mandatory for all schools and early years providers in Ofsted registered settings attended by young children i.e. from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday. There are four themes in the EYFS which express important principles underpinning effective practice in the care, development and learning of young children. The four themes are;

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

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

## Educational Programmes:

### Communication and Language:

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development:**

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.

### **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, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

### **Literacy:**

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

### **Mathematics:**

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding – such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting – children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

### **Understanding the World:**

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and fire-fighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically

and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

### **Expressive Arts and Design:**

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

### **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.

### **Planning:**

Planning in the EYFS is done collaboratively and is led by the teachers in Reception and Nursery. There is a long term plan for Reception and Nursery and this informs a half-termly scheme of work that covers adult directed learning and continuous provision. Weekly planning includes whole class teaching, focus group learning and continuous provision.

Staff plan learning opportunities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests and stage of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate. In planning and guiding children's learning, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

### **Teaching strategies:**

We ensure that there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting learning opportunities, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question

what the child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to come and complete a learning opportunity or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

By the Summer term in Nursery the children will experience more structured, adult directed tasks as they prepare for their transition to Reception, and likewise the children in Reception experience many more adult directed and independent tasks as they prepare for their transition in Year one.

## The importance of play:

Learning through play is an integral part of our Early Years curriculum. Play is a powerful motivator, encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

We believe that children learn best from opportunities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests and passions as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practice skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child-initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities is very important to us

## Teaching:

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much learning the children have understood and taken on.

Each day we use a flexible timetable with 'set' routines in place. This looks quite different in the Nursery and Reception classes. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class. In these slots we focus on our topic work, maths, literacy, phonics, and stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, concentration etc.

## The Role of the Adults in the Early Years Setting:

All adults who work or interact with young children play a crucial role in their learning. Children need interested, sensitive adults to support them as they learn by promoting qualities, skills attitudes and values which enable them to think and act for themselves, to begin to understand moral issues and to accept social responsibilities.

**In the Early Years Foundation Stage of St Alban's C of E Academy we will ensure all the teaching staff have:**

- a professional qualification and training;
- an understanding of child development and how children learn;
- the ability to plan programmes of learning appropriate to the particular group of children and/individuals;
- the ability to teach using a variety of strategies and approaches;
- an understanding of the Early Years curriculum and the EYFS in the context of their future learning;

- self-confidence and self-esteem;
- the ability to work as a member of a team and have good interpersonal skills;
- a sense of humour;
- good observational skills
- the ability to work under their own initiative;
- inestimable energy, enthusiasm and patience;
- the ability to articulate their educational philosophy;
- imagination;
- intellectual curiosity and vigour;
- commitment to teaching in the Early Years.

We will ensure a successful learning environment is provided by:

- sharing a common philosophy and perceptions of children's learning;
- supporting and providing a stimulating, supportive and purposeful ethos;
- sharing knowledge of child development and educational experiences;
- planning collaboratively for and assessing children's learning;
- sharing expertise, valuing each other's strengths and skills;
- providing role models for children, and reflecting this in all our relationships within the school and the wider community;
- promoting equal opportunities showing respect for all;
- setting agreed acceptable standards of behaviour;
- valuing and working towards a partnership between home, setting and community;
- ensuring we have an induction programme for parents/carers and encourage their participation;
- identifying individual needs for personal and professional development;
- on-going reviewing and assessing the Early Years setting and how it supports children's learning and development.

## Intimate Care:

"Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's stage of development, they may need some support, for example, dressing, verbal encouragement to wipe their bottom after toileting and changing underwear following an accident. In most cases intimate care is to do with personal hygiene.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

It is our aim that all children should be independent and we consider our role to be one of *supporting* and *encouraging* rather than *doing*.

## Assessment:

Assessment and record keeping will be consistent with the whole school's policy on assessment.

### Baseline:

Prior to children starting, staff spend time speaking to the child's parents, previous settings and read previous learning journey's to gain an understanding of the whole child and where they are at. During the first three weeks of the autumn term in Nursery or Reception, all staff use ongoing assessments, observations and conversations with the child to develop a baseline assessment. This identifies each individual's starting points in all areas so we can plan experiences to ensure progress. The following baseline assessments are also carried out.

### The RBA (Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment)

This assessment focuses on 'Language, Communication and Literacy,' and 'Mathematics.' The purpose of this is to show the progress children make from Reception until the end of KS2.

### WellComm (Speech & Language Screening)

This assessment uses a traffic light system that identifies children requiring immediate intervention, as well as those who show potential language difficulties. The system bands children by placing them into one of three categories:

- Red: Consider referral to a specialist service for further advice/assessment
- Amber: Extra support and intervention required
- Green: No intervention currently required

### NELI (Nuffield Early Language Intervention)

NELI is **an evidence-based oral language intervention for children** who show weakness in their oral language skills and who are therefore at risk of experiencing difficulty with reading. The assessment informs us if the child is at expected for their age or requires intervention from trained NELI practitioners.

### Pupil Involvement & Well-Being: (Leuven Scale)

The Leuven scales are used to measure children's emotional well-being and involvement to assess learning, development and progress of children.

### Ongoing Observation:

All ongoing observations are used to inform weekly planning and identify children's next steps. This formative assessment does not involve prolonged periods of time away from the children and excessive paper work. Practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgements through discussions with other practitioners, photographs and physical examples such as a child's drawing / making. Some observations are uploaded using Evidence Me and shared with the supporting parents and carers and examples kept in individual files.

**Phonic assessments** are carried out using **phonics Tracker every half term** to quickly identify pupils that are not making expected progress. Our aim is for children to **'keep up' rather than 'catch up'** where possible.

**Assessments are completed three times per year** and the Class Teacher updates the progress children have made and plans next steps accordingly.

In the Summer term of Reception, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile will reflect on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents/carers and any other adults whom the teacher, parent/carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development will be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners will indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development ('Expected') or are working towards the expected levels ('Emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile. Reception staff will moderate children to ensure consistency with the judgements. Teachers will identify more able children that are working above the expected level of development and provide information to the year 1 teachers.

Year 1 teachers will be given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in the seven areas of learning. These will inform a dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of activities in Year 1.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other schools within our Multi-Academy Trust, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority. St Alban's C of E Academy will share the results of the profile with parents and carers and explain when and how they can discuss the Profile with the teacher who completed it.

The Profile will be completed for all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities. Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with special educational needs and disabilities will be made as appropriate. Children will have differing levels of skills and abilities across the Profile and it is important that there is a full assessment of all areas of their development, to inform plans for future activities and to identify any additional support needs.

## Parents and the Wider Community:

At St Alban's C of E Academy we believe the starting point for developing positive links with the home is a belief in the philosophy of partnership, where parents and staff are seen to have different roles, but both have equal importance. This implies a two way process, with information and knowledge, passing freely between the partners. These processes begin to form link between the nursery and home. To ensure this process is then further developed we will ensure that we:

- value the child's previous and present home experiences, acknowledging that they have as much to learn from parents/carers and their special knowledge and relationships with their individual children, as parents/carers have to learn about their children's continuing education in the school environment;
- aim for all parents/carers to feel confident, valued and able to contribute effectively to the education not only of their child but also other children;
- foster the use of parents/carers own skills, expertise and interests which reflect the cultural, social diversity and values that exist within the setting and wider community;
- provide a warm and welcoming environment which fosters a sense of belonging so that the setting is not seen as an isolated but part of the community;
- ensure opportunities exist for parents/carers to clarify and discuss how they can best be involved in the learning process; allowing for carers/family/social circumstances, work/further education commitments and personal inclination;
- support and encourage parents/carers in home-learning activities and within the Foundation Stage;
- show an awareness of the learning needs of the parents/carers themselves.
- maintain good links between nursery and other carers such as wrap-around care and child minders.

At St Alban's C of E Academy we believe effective partnerships which results in high quality learning depends on all the knowledge, skill, effort and example of all adults.

We believe successful learning involves adults and children . . .

Sharing  
Planning  
Observing  
Recording  
Evaluating  
Co-operating  
and celebrating together.

However these Early Learning Goals do not themselves constitute a curriculum. They are goals for learning for most children to achieve by the time they leave the Foundation stage, though some children will progress beyond these goals whilst still in Reception. Our aim is to provide a firm and effective foundation for later achievement with learning objectives that dovetail into the National Curriculum.

The Early Years curriculum will be delivered through cross curricular topics in Nursery and Reception and, in preparation for the transition into KS1, separate elements of literacy and numeracy teaching introduced to Reception classes at the appropriate time.

It will develop knowledge, attitudes, values, understanding and experience across subject boundaries.

It will have structure, breadth, balance, relevance, differentiation, progression and continuity.

By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the majority children will have achieved Early Learning Goals set out by the DFES.

## Special Educational Needs:

Practitioners will need to plan for each child's individual learning requirements, including those children who need additional support or have particular needs or disabilities and also for children who appear gifted or talented. The focus should be on removing barriers for children where they already exist and on preventing learning difficulties from developing. Early years practitioners have a key role to play in identifying learning needs and responding quickly to any area of particular difficulty, to develop an effective strategy to meet these needs so that later difficulties can be avoided. Wherever possible, practitioners should work together with staff from other agencies, such as therapy and sensory impairment services, to provide the best learning opportunities for individual children.

Practitioners should take specific action to help children with special educational needs to make the best possible progress by:

- providing for those who need help with communication, language and literacy skills through, for example:
  - using alternative and augmentative communication, language including signs and symbols;
  - using visual and written materials in different formats, including large print and symbol text;
  - using information and communication technology, other technological aids and taped materials.
- Planning, where necessary to develop understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences through, for example:
  - using materials and resources that children can access through sight, touch, sound and smell;
  - using word descriptions and other stimuli to make up for a lack of first-hand experiences;

- using information and communication technology, visual and other materials to increase children's knowledge of the wider world.
- Planning for full participation in learning and in physical and practical activity through , for example:
  - providing additional support from adults when needed;
  - adapting activities or environments and providing alternative activities where appropriate;
  - using specialist aids and equipment.
- Helping children who have particular difficulties with behaviour to take part in learning effectively through, for example:
  - adapting activities or environments and providing alternative activities where appropriate;
  - setting reasonable expectations which have been discussed with the child;
  - establishing clear boundaries;
  - appreciating and praising children's efforts;
  - giving children every chance and encouragement to develop the skills they need to work well with child or children;
  - helping children to value and respect their own contribution and that of others.

### **English as an additional language:**

Some children in our Early Years setting will have a home language other than English. Practitioners will value this linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning. These children may spend a long time listening before they speak English and will often be able to understand much of what they hear, particularly where communication through gesture, sign or facial expression and other visual images is encouraged. Learning opportunities should be planned to help children develop their English, and support given from staff within the setting.

### **Continuity & Progression:**

All children's development is a continuous process that does not proceed uniformly or at an even pace. Careful planning and development of activities, teaching approaches and strategies, organisation of the learning environment and the range of experiences will ensure that the children experience a continuum from an Early Years based curriculum based on Early Learning Goals to the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum.

Clear transition arrangements ensure smooth, happy transfer from one setting to another. To achieve this well ensure there is:

- Close links between staff in Year 1, Reception and Nursery classes, play groups, carers and parents;
- Exchanges of work e.g. nursery children's pictures displayed in reception class prior to admission;
- Shared record of an individual child, including medical information which may affect learning and assessment;
- Gradual introduction into the new Nursery setting so that children can be admitted in small groups where possible, with children they know from previous setting;
- Sensitive introductions to the routines e.g. playtimes and lunchtimes; collective worship.
- Preparing for transition by introducing some routines and teaching styles.
- Induction meetings and workshops for Parents and Carers, sharing information and giving the opportunity for them to ask questions.
- Regular time in the final half term for Nursery children to visit their new Teacher and classroom, accompanied by familiar staff.
- Reception children having opportunities to meet and visit their new Year One Teacher and classroom.

### Adults will ensure equal opportunities:

With regard to race and culture by providing experiences that:

- Recognise, respect and give value to children and families from all races and cultures;
- Actively seek to ensure good role models;
- Do not serve to reinforce negative stereotypes;

With regard to gender by providing experiences that:

- Involve all children in the full range of the curriculum;
- Promote positive role models avoiding stereotypes;
- Engender an equal expectation.

With regard to children with special educational needs and or disability by providing:

- Appropriate resources to aid accessibility to all aspects of the life of the setting;
- Opportunities that encourage independence and raise levels of confidence;
- Staff development that ensures an understanding and knowledge of the needs of the individual child;
- Access to positive role models.

With regard to socially and economically deprived children by providing experiences that:

- Ensure that no child feels less valued than any other;
- Take place within a stable and secure environment;
- Encourage, support and develop the family as a whole.

### Safeguarding/Welfare of Pupils:

The class teacher is responsible for the pastoral care of each child as well as the academic side of school life.

All safeguarding and child protection concerns will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and procedures followed in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Named members of the Early Years teaching team are qualified in Paediatric First Aid. Medication will be kept well out of reach of pupils and administered in accordance with the Medicines in School Policy.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

All staff and adults are required not to have mobile phones out or in use in the setting during the hours children are present.

### Impact:

The impact of our pedagogy and our curriculum is measured by how effectively it helps our children develop into well rounded individuals who embody our school values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners and valuable future citizens.

Our children make strong progress academically, emotionally, creatively, socially and physically. Knowledge, understanding and skills are secured and embedded so that children attain highly and are fully prepared to ensure children are ready and fully equipped to begin learning the National Curriculum programme of study in Year 1.

At the end of EYFS our children;

- have strong communication skills, both written and verbal. Our children also listen respectfully and with tolerance to the views of others,
- take pride in all that they do, always striving to do their best,
- demonstrate emotional resilience and the ability to persevere when they encounter challenge,
- develop a sense of self-awareness and become confident in their own abilities,
- are kind, respectful and honest, demonstrate inclusive attitudes and have a sense of their role in our wider society.

### Links to other Policies

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Feedback and Marking Policy
- Assessment policy
- SEND policy
- Equality information Policy

## List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy